

MORAL VALUES, ATTITUDES AND MOODS

A book on ethics for a new world order

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*The knowledge explained in
this book is based on
revelations of God Father Shiva
through Prajapita Brahma*

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MORAL VALUES

OUR universe consists of two different aspects: the physical or material and the spiritual or metaphysical. Had man been only physical or material entity, he would not have felt concerned with the moral or spiritual values. In that case, he would have behaved like a machine. But we find that almost all types of man's actions—be they political, social, economic, filial, conjugal, ritualistic—are adjudged by the society from the moral point of view also. The Watergate Scandal which led to the exit of President Nixon from the White House and to the launching of prosecution against his top aides is an historical illustration, the memory of which is still fresh in the minds of the people all over the world. It clearly shows that even if a person has reached the apex of political and executive machinery by means of an unprecedented popular vote and is strongly set in the highest echelons of power and is granted by conventions or the political constitution of his country, certain privileges, prerogatives and immunities, the society looks at his actions from the moral point of view also.

Moral dimension

This instance from recent history bears eloquent testimony to the fact that human actions do not only have the space and time dimensions but they have the moral dimension also. These have not to be measured in terms of horse power but their moral strength or weakness has also to be measured. Man's actions have not to be seen as *motor* actions but we have also to see the *motive* behind his actions. There is a psychology and an ethics behind his actions and one can overlook these at one's own peril.

Can we neglect moral values?

Be it known to all who do not know or who pretend not to know that there is no human being, born even at a place far removed from the citadels of civilisation, who does not have even an iota of moral sense. Ever since the world had its first sun-rise in the Time Cycle, life had its moral aspect too. All law, all traditions, all ecology, all professional acts,

even all branches of learning have their roots in morality; they have some ethics guiding them. Even the aim of all these is, at least partially if not wholly, to set some norms or some code which should guide or govern the relation between man and his family or man and the society or man and his environment, even between man and his ownself. And, to deny or defy the omnipresent moral and spiritual laws is to befool one's own self and to act against one's own wishes and to defeat one's own object of life.

The Lesson

Let it be known to all that each one's life will be judged on the touchstone of morality, i.e., whether he did good to himself and to those around or he was a source of nuisance and a cause of fear and harm to others. The scale of moral and spiritual values will sensitively and accurately weigh all his actions, from the most insignificant to the most significant one. His advisers, promptors, seducers and abettors will not be able to rescue him but will also stand as co-accomplices and each one will be punished or rewarded according to his own acts.

The standard to judge what is right and what is wrong or what is virtue and what is vice has been varying from Age to Age, from country to country and from one community to another community. So, one comes across many ethical theories, connected with the names of various religions and known as Hindu Ethics, Christian Ethics, etc., or associated with the names of various thinkers and philosophers, such as Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche or Aristotle and Plato.

But, we take this opportunity to emphasise it on the basis of our own experience that the highest moral laws are those which are universal and are enunciated and taught by God through Brahma, also known as Adam, to re-establish the Golden-aged divine social order and to guide man to self-realisation and virtuous living. So, the principle, underlying His moral teachings is the aphorism: "Act in this world as a holy angel or a Golden-aged deity or a Raja Yogi or a holy son of Brahma should act."

In this book, we have not dealt with moral values and virtues separately nor have we discussed morality under separate heads, such as personal morality, social morality, business ethics, etc. We have delineated only a small part of the spiritual ethics taught by God through Brahma as one would discuss the topics of inculcation of divine virtues or eradication of vices.

DIVINE QUALITIES AND RIGHT ATTITUDES

MORALITY and virtue are more precious than gems. They give satisfaction to man himself and endear him to his Creator and to the public. Not only do they elevate him spiritually but save him from worldly troubles and botherations.

Let us, for example, consider the virtue of Tolerance. A minute's tolerance would, sometimes, save life as well as property. If angry passions of a man cause a quarrel, and the other man is not tolerant, matters may become so serious as to cause loss of property and even of life because rising passions and enmity result in stabbing and in arson. If he, on the contrary, kept silence, observed restraint or expressed regret, the other man might be calmed and the whole matter decided satisfactorily.

Straightforwardness indicates a clean heart as crookedness shows a filthy mind. Just as filth breeds germs and endangers health, so does craftiness not only not let man be stable but also breeds bad qualities. By being straight, he rests in his own self and becomes a desirable person. In order to secure health and inner stability, rich people would willingly spend millions.

Contentment naturally keeps one happy. It is held by all that a happy man sees happiness all around him. If contentment is lacking, sovereignty of even the whole world will not bring happiness. Isn't it, therefore, a priceless virtue?

Humility or Meekness, i.e., freedom from pride, is a very noble quality. He, who is free from conceit, never breaks down because he is flexible and can bend a little. He is on good terms with all and sundry.

Comradeship and love form the basis of one's achievements. He who has love of God and is strongly linked to Him, obtains full Fruition (*Jeewan-Mukti*). This is because he is thoroughly meek and untouched by conceit. Such a one has the blessings of God and of mankind. He has thus in him what is called the essence of all divine attributes. Bliss and spiritual might spring forth in him because of this virtue. Verily, it is more precious than a garland of pearls, drawing to the possessor thereof the attention of all and increasing his glory.

Calmness works like a refrigerator, installed in one's Reason, keeping *Gyān*¹ and *Yoga* always fresh. Like a cooler in a room, it increases man's efficiency. So much does he earn by dint of *Yoga* that, in *Satyuga*—the age of righteousness and peace—his coffers are full of numberless jewels and wealth.

Cheerfulness is the beauty of the face or its ornaments. He who is sullen is really ugly.

Now consider the virtue of Inwardliness. For the very spiritual delight that there lies in this virtue, several *Rajas*² in *Dwāpur Yugā*³ and *Kaliyuga*⁴ gave up their kingdoms. Surely does inwardliness give us spiritual happiness which even palaces, wealth, prosperity and sovereignty cannot give.

Service in the spirit of propagation of real Knowledge brings its fruit by way of our becoming eligible for divine sovereignty. Serving others means doing service to one's ownself, because, in this way, man becomes likeable not only to one's ownself and to others but also to God and, therefore, is easily noted for the rulership of the diety-world.

So are charity and renunciation invaluable assets. Even a handful of rice given in charity directly for divine purposes in the present fast-dying vicious world, will fetch a golden palace in the coming times. Sudama's case is in point. He who gives away, makes a bumper fortune thereby.

So, man can see that each one of these virtues is conducive to great happiness. Looking at them in this way, one will be filled with enthusiasm to acquire them and will try accordingly.

1. Divine Knowldge. 2. Kings. 3. Copper Age. 4. Iron Age.

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THE WAY TO PROGRESS OR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

THERE is hardly any man in the world who is not inclined to improve. Of course, some aspire for improvement in their *relationship* with those with whom they have to live and work whereas others work for improvement in their economic status. Some want to improve or enhance their personality whereas others are more concerned about their spiritual progress. In any case, the will to make some progress is basic to all normal beings and the efforts to improve are a sign of life. And, the volition, underlying all efforts of man to bring about improvement is mainly one's aspiration to be more happy.

If one ponders over this question of attainment of true happiness, one would come to the conclusion that man's happiness ultimately depends upon his behaviour or his reaction to the external stimuli and his ways of thinking which, in turn, depend upon his inner urges, his tendencies and the training he had. So, in order to have any other kind of improvement, man has to bring about improvement in his outlook, his habits, his mannerism and his ways and, for this, he has to pick up and learn certain things and to unlearn certain others. If man's process of learning (or unlearning wrong things) stops and his effort to put into practice what he has learnt already ceases, or his capacity and will to make efforts is exhausted, his improvement and progress also come to a halt. At this stage, life becomes morbid and the process of degeneration starts.

Pride—a great hurdle

Evidently, man's capacity to learn, to understand and to be practical is something very important. But, there are certain hurdles in the way. The path to progress is paved with some obstacles which are mostly of man's own making. One of these is man's pride—man's arrogance about his own knowledge. It is easy to teach him who has no pride of his own intelligence but he who regards himself as perfectly wise, would say to others, "There is nothing that I do not know. How strange, you have come to teach me, whereas I have taught many persons like you". It is difficult to offer correction to such a man as this, for he assumes airs in

such a manner that people would stutter in his presence; he loses temper no sooner than anyone would start informing him on any subject. So, if one wants to improve and, for that purpose, is inclined to accept some corrections, one should give up self-conceit because it precludes the possibility of learning good things of life and unlearning wrong or harmful things.

Egotism, crookedness and fickleness instil in man the dread of death.¹ These have made man a capricious prig like a monkey. Why should we defer the effort to be rid of this habit? It has warped man's mind and intellect at every point, humped his back-bone and thrown out of shape his neck and legs and thus turned him into a camel.² In other words, it has distorted his speech and character.

Attachment to Body and Worldly things

Another major hurdle on man's way to spiritual progress is his attachment to worldly objects, his lust for sensual pleasures³, his sense of deep involvement and his attachment to his body. Little does man realise that, at this fag-end of Iron Age, when man has lost his morals, the worldly things are devoid of their original essence. One who wants spiritual improvement, should know that the present unrighteous world has no substance. Is the bark of a sugar cane worth chewing when the juice has been squeezed out of it? So has the world lost all its sap and truth because it has become debased. Chewing the bark of the cane will only damage the jaws, and equally ruinous is one's attachment to the sensual pleasures related to the materials of the *tamoguni*⁴ world of today. It is worthless. This body of ours is assailed by several different diseases, is made of debased (*Tamoguni*) matter and, because it is born of sex-lust, it is bad. It is gross of foolishness to be enamoured of this *tamoguni* physical frame or to be attached to hollow and degraded objects of the senses and thus to lose deity-sovereignty. Is it wisdom of any sort to run after this body, made of materials which are liable to disintegrate, and to lose all chances of getting Beatitude (*Jeevan-Mukti*) and thus to accomplish only one's own forfeiture at the Great Court? So, one who aspires for spiritual improvement, should push out of attachment the

1. बहुत चतुराई, यम का भय।

2. It is rightly said that a camel has no part of his body straight.

3. Even from the point of view of worldly progress, a person who indulges into sensual pleasures, loses respect in the eyes of the people, ruins his business or wastes his wealth.

4. That which is the lowest grade of low morals.

objects of senses or the thirst for these, with only one determined effort for otherwise, it would mean that one has lost or is losing one's precious life over a mere trifle.

One should also note that body-consciousness does not appear in one shape only. It has several different kinds of manifestations. One of the forms is that man's awareness is narrowed down in all respects and his view is blurred in narrow limits. All the time, he is enwarped in the household and his worldly relationships. At no time, in his dealings, the feeling manifests that the whole world is his soul's abode, that all souls are his brothers and that he has his duty towards other souls also. On the contrary, he is, from early morning till late in the night, busy working for his small household and for his own well-being, and that too from the purely bodily angle. He has turned his mind away from any thought that he has to work for his spiritual improvement and that he has certain obligations to discharge in the world-family.

Knowing all this, one should get rid of body-consciousness. The first step for a man is to withdraw his attention and attachment from 'religions' of the body and its various relationships, which rob one's life of its essence, and to devote his mind and body and his possessions to the welfare of the world. This will bring in him qualities such as service, dedication, sacrifice, meekness, fellow-feeling, toleration and hundred-and-one other noble traits of high character. It will quicken his efforts for self-improvement.

A great obstacle

That a man does not take this step, shows that he has not ceased to be body-conscious nor given up mental association with the material ties of this world. His heart goes out again and again to his household and his 'bodily' links because he has not yet given up attachment. It is clear that neither love nor spiritual ties with God and His family are yet formed within him. He cannot make even this small sacrifice in his last life in the Cycle and, therefore continues to be unhappy in many ways. He is thus excluding from his mind God's great family and depriving himself of future inheritance from God. How harmful body-consciousness is! What a great obstacle it is in the path to self-improvement!

Reflecting in this manner, one should teach one's own self to rest for sometime from occupation with the body and its ties, whatever the circumstances one is placed in and to contribute to some extent towards one's own welfare and towards spiritual service to others. One should

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VICE AND VIRTUE

THERE are some people who do not recognise at all any difference between good and evil or duty and non-duty. They say that good and evil are just the projection of one's own thinking. To them, there is no hard and fast line between the two. So, they suggest that one should not, therefore, think of actions in terms of good or bad but should go on performing actions for actions' sake or for fun-sake.

But, why do such people offer this suggestion at all? Evidently, they do so for they think that their suggestion will do some 'good' to those who accept it in practice. So, it shows that it is wrong to deny the innate and eternal difference between virtue and sin. What to say of acts, thinking itself may also be good or bad, viceless or sinful.

Some people look only to the immediate effects of some action and these effects appear to them to be good and satisfactory although, actually and ultimately, these are harmful. For example, the act of scratching on the part of a person whose wound is near-healing, seems to him to be immediately comforting though it is, in fact, ultimately injurious. So, looking only to the instantaneous result, however harmful it may later be, some unwise persons say that there is nothing intrinsically bad or good, sin or virtue and, thus, they embark on evil course and indulge into vices. However, in fact, and as viewed in a wider perspective, it cannot be denied that every action may be either 'good' or 'bad'.

Sufferings are the Proof

The proof of pudding, it is said, lies in the eating thereof. There can be seen many persons who have physical deformities or mental deficiencies from birth. What is the cause of the suffering of such ill-fated ones? There is no effect without a cause; so, it may be asked, "What is the pitiable condition of physically ill or deformed persons due to?" Thus, it is undeniably due to some evil actions on their part, done presently or in the past. They must have violated some laws of hygiene. Therefore, to deny altogether any difference between good and evil would mean closing one's eyes to reality and to wish to create a state of anarchy and lawlessness, resulting in the utmost downfall and misery of the world. If one does not recognise any difference between duty and non-duty or:

right and wrong, one would violate even Government laws, and thereby, create chaos. One ought to bear in mind that, not only the difference between good and evil actually exists but it is essential to recognise it for one's own welfare and for the good of the society.

Human Beings have only paltry Knowledge of the Law-of Action

Now, take the case of those who are prepared to believe in the difference between two kinds of acts. They also fail to judge between what is virtue and what is sin. There has been age-long controversy as to what is *Punya* (good) and what is *Papa* (sin). For example, if one man has been commending the intake of meat, another man has been vehemently condemning it because it involves an act of violence and mercilessness. Again, if one person has been advocating philosophically that, to strike a death blow to a sworn enemy is an act of religious valour, justice and fairness, worthy of admiration and great reward, another one has been preaching in unequivocal terms the cult of complete non-violence under all circumstances. Thus, there has been a huge gulf of difference between opinions of mortal beings, for they do not possess the esoteric knowledge of the law of *Karma*. They possess only paltry knowledge of the laws of action as they apply to souls.

Nevertheless, the knowledge of what is sin and what is virtue or what is duty and what is non-duty is imperative for every human soul.

The Touchstone for Virtue and Sin

If one begins to compile a comprehensive list of good and bad actions, it would be impossible to complete it because every human being is confronted with new situations or problems moment after moment, and, every now and then, one is faced with the question 'should I do this act or renounce it?' 'Is this my duty or not?' Therefore, what one practically needs is a touchstone rather than a list to judge whether an action is good or vicious.

The knowledge about *Karma* or the touchstone for testing good and evil cannot be imparted by anyone except by God, *Dharmarāj*, the Supreme Expiator or the Supreme Adjudicator.

The actions, speech or thoughts which are motivated by or admixed with the perverted emotions, called sex-lust, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance and sloth or lethargy are sins. And, among these, sex-lust, is the arch-enemy of man; it is the chief sin, for, it causes such weakness in man that he falls an easy prey to other vices.

Body-consciousness or Ignorance is the root cause

If one ponders over the cause of all the vices, one will notice that all vices are, invariably, due to body-consciousness which is due to the ignorance of the knowledge of the self as separate from the body. i.e., the non-self. Therefore, you can say that sin or *Pāpā*¹ is an action that is performed in the mental state of body-consciousness and forgetfulness-of-the-self and of God. And, *Punya*² or good action is that which is done while one is in soul-consciousness and God-communion. When a person is in soul-conscious state, he looks upon all other human beings also as his brothers—being the spiritual children of one Supreme Father; he treats them with love, kindness and spirit of co-operation. On the other hand, when a person is body-conscious, his mind is influenced by the feeling of attachment towards those related to him on the basis of caste, colour or country of his body. This attachment with a few and aversion of prejudice towards others, gives rise to anger, greed, etc. which harm himself and others also. So, it can be said that the actions which lead to welfare, i.e., are in conformity with *Swadharma*, or good actions while the actions opposed to *Swadharma*,³ or duty of the self, are sins. The latter kind of actions create bondages and are harmful and must, therefore, be renounced.

The cause of all sufferings is the subtle and invisible bondage of the present and past sins.⁴ This bondage cannot be cut off except by means of the subtle sword of Divine Knowledge and Yoga. Various forms of Worship or *Bhakti*, though symbolic of a person's religious fervour, are impotent for breaking the shackles of actions, for, *Bhakti*, does not give to man that spiritual strength which Yoga gives; it does not enable a person to be soul-conscious and God-conscious on right lines.

Soul-consciousness and God-communion are, therefore, of utmost importance for attaining emancipation from past vicious resolves or the bondage of past evil actions. When a person is soul-conscious, he enjoys a state of super-sensuous joy. In that state, he does not become a slave to sensual pleasures.

Godly Knowledge is Essential for Soul-Consciousness

Now, just as the acquaintance of the particulars of one's relatives

1. The Hindi equivalent to 'Sin'

2. The Hindi equivalent of 'Virtue'

3. *Swadharma* - Purity and Peace which are the real and original nature of soul are known as 'Swadharma'

4. Acts influenced by anyone of the six well known evils

oblige one to remember his or her bodily relatives and friends, even so, complete knowledge of the self, its immortal relationship with the Supreme soul and other such particulars enable the self to be soul-conscious and to have communion with God, the World Father. One should, therefore, acquire that knowledge if one aspires to be liberated from bad actions.

CAN WE LEAD A LIFE FREE OF VICES?

TO-DAY, many people say that without indulging into vices, one cannot carry on one's worldly activities. Actually, this is a wrong belief. Consider the work of a hospital nurse. She gives the best of service to the children entrusted to her care or looks after the patients in her ward with proper attention, sympathy and affection but she does her job without any infatuation, attachment or *Moha*. She does not wail when anyone of them dies nor does she experience the agony of separation when anyone of them leaves the hospital. Can't then a mother attend to her children or family-members without any sense of deep involvement and attachment and also the worry that is born out of it?

Do we not notice that a good judge does his duty without any emotional disturbance? He decrees various sentences to those who commit crime or break the law. Yet, while listening to the statements of witnesses, he does not show any anger against the culprit. He announces even capital punishment on some but does not show any anguish. He does so with a sense of impartiality, detachment and duty. Can't we also lead a life of duty, combined with detachment if we try and try again, having the faith in us that we can do it, for God helps those who help themselves?

Similarly, do we not see that a cashier, handling cash at the 'Deposit Counter' in a bank, receives a huge amount daily but his ego does not get puffed up nor his greed get inflated at this, for he deals with that job as a trustee? Even so, can't we, taking ourselves to be trustees to God, who is the Master, give up greed and pride? Certainly we can, provided we know our Master and have this relationship with Him? The instances quoted above show that, in fact, we daily carry out some of our activities or duties without indulging into vices. Now, we have only to widen that area, to extend its scope, nay to renounce the vices absolutely and to lead a lotus-like life, for this is the only way to peace and contentment in this life and to heavenly life hereafter. But this purity in life is possible only through Raja-Yoga.

The Raja-Yoga, taught by God Himself, has immense power and innumerable potentialities. By means of it, one can not only win full victory over *Maya*, the Great Temptress, or over the Evil and Satanic forces, but can win the world-sovereignty without firing even a single shot and killing even a single being.

THE ABILITY TO PICK AND LEARN VIRTUES

THERE are many virtues which we should adopt in life. The more the virtues that we have, the dearer we are to God, the higher will be the deity-status we shall attain and the greater will be our happiness—this is the law. And, to be able to rid ourselves of evil ways and to have divine virtues instead, man needs mainly the quality that it is known as *Gun-Grahakta*, i.e. the ability to pick and learn virtues. Its speciality is that it is the preparation for coming into possession of all divine virtues.

An Anology

Let us take an anology. The seed may be very good and the watering of the land most proper, but if the land itself is not well-hoed, manured and dressed, the seed is as wasted. Similarly, without applying the faculty of learning from others' examples, the ground for receiving the seed of virtues and rendering our spiritual efforts useful cannot be prepared. As long as man has not acquired the ability to mark the virtues of others and, instead, he devotes attention to their defects, he will fail to adopt those virtues, even though he may be hearing discourses on them. So, he who is engaged in spiritual efforts, must make a resolve to imbibe virtues wherever they are to be found and to wash off all the muck of demerits.

But we generally observe that man does not learn good things from others as quickly as he marks their defects and copies them. How is it that one notices the defects of others and, soon after, copies them? Why does not this apply to copying their virtues?

Why does one copy defects of others?

The fact is that the main cause of marking of others' defects and thinking of them is forgetfulness of the object of life and a certain carelessness in respect of one's own amelioration. It should also be noted that the existence, in anyone's mind, of envy or enmity towards another person, makes him spot out the demerits of that person. But, if in him, there is love instead, the existence of defects may be known to him but these do not stay long in his consciousness. There is in him sympathetic understanding of the person whom he loves and he wishes that the former may improve.

On the contrary, where there is hatred, envy or malice, the defects of the person nauseate and irritate him as they appear larger than they actually are, leading him to entertain thoughts of pulling him down and even to slander him. He represents these defects of his in a magnified form, made saucy by his own imagination. Thus, a person of this type is busy the whole day taking cognizance, like a crow, of whatever is dirty, picking it and cawing continuously to call the other crows to the dung-heap, where all these assemble to hold as it were their conference. That is why, in the language of the wise, the slanderer or the one who notices only the demerits of others, is called a crow whereas he who picks the pearls-like virtues is called a swan. And, higher up, there is the divine nightingale who sings delightfully of the divine virtues that Godly Knowledge gives, in sweet and musical notes. It depends, therefore, upon every individual to find for himself whether he prefers the crow or the nightingale—the crow desiring only to disturb the even tenor of life by his caws or the swan picking pearls or the nightingale delighting people with his thrilling songs of divine wisdom.

Now one may ask as to why there is envy and malice in man and why man forgets his life's aim and how to prevent a situation of this kind.

Why envy or malice?

These are there in man because of his body consciousness. To make it clear, we may say the origin of all these is the want of fulfilment of some desire, may be that for respect or any other allied object. Anyone disappointing him, incurs his displeasure which, in course of time, appears in the form of envy, ill-will, slander, animosity, making him see the mote in other's eye and taking steps to lower him in the estimation of others to the extent of ostracising him. An envious, ill-willed individual would not let his enemy be, and, wherever the latter is talked of, the former starts slandering him as if it is his religion to do so. Thus, he loses count of himself because he does not realise that, by thinking of the faults and describing them, he is simply gathering a load of sins and is leading himself only towards decline, while exulting in the feeling that he is making the other suffer and debasing him by timely exposure. The truth is otherwise: he is smashing his own future to pieces.

The person who is slandered thus is no doubt alienated from him but the slanderer is alienated gradually from God Himself for the very simple reason that there is no room in His mind for the backbiter. Rightly, therefore, do wise men pray to God to retain knowledge of their defects.¹

1. ८२५ ई., मोक्ष स्वर्गसुखं चित्तं न धनम्।

Is not a traducer, like a potential customer, looking for demerits only?

On the contrary, he who remembers what his aims are, deals with all with affection, and, even when he marks any defects in others, he does not become intolerant. He is not beside himself because he does not go beyond the limits of propriety. Because he has in him the milk of human kindness, he does not—as the Supreme Lord too does not—retain the knowledge of these defects but helps them remove these and tries as the Lord actually does, to fill the vacant places with virtues.

Why look for dross and dirt?

The one who has an eye on others' stains is himself subject to flashes of anger, and wherever he goes, he cannot but spread around himself just so much scum or dross and dirt. He is instrumental in telling people together by the ears. Among some, he creates mutual hatred or indifference, and also spreads disunity, schism and, consequently, exacerbation of feelings. Such a one's company is very harmful. The habitual back-biter not only never finds refuge in God but also perverts the minds of those who fall in with him. He deflects them from the Lord and converts them into *Māyā*'s obedient disciples.

Marking bad points in others leads to debasing one's own self

The wise man knows that *Kaliyuga* is about to end and that people at large are full of vices. That is what makes man say in the course of his prayers to God, "Lord, I have no merit; you will take pity on me."¹ or "Do not, O Lord, retain knowledge of my demerits,"² or, again in this strain, "O Lord, I am low, wicked, and vicious."³ Defects, in fact vices, are predominant in the world today and almost all have fallen from the high status of deities and even from man's state, and, therefore, turned devils. That's why the merciful God has had to descend into this world of ours. Yet here is still left in all of us a strain—a trifling mark—of one divine virtue or another, for if the virtues had, all of the them, been completely annihilated, God's descent into the world not have been of much use. God's mission is to awaken virtues which have, as it were, lain under the earth, become emaciated, or reached the very bottom of the abyss of oblivion, in other words, mostly dead as a door nail. To awaken these, it is His task to bring them into the open and to impart knowledge which

1. मैं निर्गुण हूँ, को गुण नहीं, आपे ही तरस प्योई।

2. प्रभु जी मोहे अवगुण चित्त न धरो।

3. मैं मूर्ख, खल, कामी, कृपा करो भरता।

reminds us of their existence and to make us work for their uplift.

Hence, to get rid of the habit of marking other's shortcomings only, we should always remind ourselves thus: "There is no one who has not got a good many defects. I myself have many of these. The world has reached the lowest stage of degeneration, though it is a fact that everyone has surely one virtue, one good point or another. Hence, I should not note the bad points of theirs, nor hear them nor recount them nor devote any thought to them, as, otherwise, I should be debasing my own-self. Has not the benign God commanded me not to see, hear, speak or think evil or do any evil thing? Seeing evil sights and doing evil actions makes for an evil life. So, I should see and learn to acquire the same kind of merit, however small it be, that is in others." Thinking on these lines alone will man nurse in himself this noble stand-point and this quality.

Proper View-point

All souls from one vast family, and, from the point of view of souls, are *brothers* to one another. A feeling of consanguinity will be born in man if he employs this view point. We shall come to love the Supreme Soul, because He is the Guardian or the Supreme Father of this family. Towards all other souls, we shall have good wishes and the feeling of brotherhood, co-operation and love. We shall then, on reflection, say to ourselves: "Not only are we God's children and brothers among ourselves but that, in *Satyuga* and *Tretāyuga*, there was affection like that found in a family-relationship in the physical world. It was in the later epochs that *Māyā* engendered differences and envy and malice, and now, in the present *yuga*, the Supreme Father has again, as of yore, given us the faculty to understand that we are *brothers* and should love one another and live together in perfect amity. Thus will we come to love the Supreme Father and His children. If we develop this love, we will certainly note merits and not defects in others because man naturally marks only good points in him whom he loves whereas he takes note of defects in him whom he hates.

The Supreme Soul graciously imparts *Gyān* and the gift of virtues to a soul, gone completely awry, and we should, similarly, irrespective of individual shortcomings and without doing anybody wrong, direct one another's attention to divine knowledge, co-operate with one another and set, for their benefit, the example of virtue.

Marking defects in others is like pricking thorns to one's own self

Marking other people's defects means applying thorns to one's ownself, and recounting these defects in others means pricking them,

wounding them and even letting them be overpowered by *Māyā*. But now that He is converting this degenerate world of thorns into a noble garden, and transforming us, veritable prickly thorns into flowers, it is but proper for us to learn from good examples in order to become beautiful and *sweet*, and abandon the idea of inflicting pain on others. Otherwise, in the Great Adjudicator's court, we shall suffer pains and punishments. What, therefore, is the use of efforts which result in punishments? It is really no effort at all.

So let us bear it in mind that compassion and mercifulness are virtues whereas picking holes in others' coats is a vice. One should try to understand more clearly what forms it takes, what are the consequences of indulging in it and what are the marks of him who is subject to it, so that one keeps away from contact with him and his vices.

CHEERFULNESS

CHEERFULNESS is such a quality that it not only keeps up the spirits of the man who possesses it but also is of service to others. We may say that it is a 'serviceable' quality.

Cheerfulness on one face makes many hearts bloom

A man who possesses cheerfulness may not utter even a word but those who come into contact with him, mark the lines of good spirits on his face and this brings happiness on their faces also. Thus, they learn in a practical way the truth that spiritual communion or yoga with God makes life so happy that the yogi's heart is always blooming, however much the world around him may be shaking in its shoes. They learn also that no trace of anxiety, depression, fatigue, confusion, displeasure, despair and the like are to be seen in yogi's countenance which is like a flower in blossom because of their being, in his mind, transcendental happiness and the bliss that there is in meeting the Blissful Lord. Hence, cheerfulness gives, by its very existence, the God's invitation to man to acquire the treasures of divine knowledge and to render his life excellent. Just as the sweetness of a scent, used by a man spreads without any effort on his part and fills people with happiness, so does a glimpse of the general countenance of a happy man surely give pleasure to others, at least for some time. In order to make man acquire other virtues, he has to be taught, but the quality, called cheerfulness travels of its own self to his face and then gets possession of him.

Liked by people and by God

He who possesses this quality, is liked by God and mankind, including himself, because in it are included other good qualities, exactly in the manner in which the lines of continued happiness are their only where tolerance, contentment and the like are present. He who has a sullen face, who frowns with displeasure, or whom even ordinary situations confuse, is not liked by people and, because he lacks the joy that divine knowledge or wisdom gives and the bliss that mental link with the Lord gives, he is not liked by God also and, thus, he gets more and more weary of himself. Hence, however grave a situation becomes, man should never be displeased with himself, or despair or be sad or lose rest.

He should, on the contrary, be always cheerful. The kind of impressions we get now, we shall carry with us in life after death. He who cries always will, after death, go to the region of tears but he who laughs, will move over to happy region, namely *Swarga*— the Heavenly Abode.

No doubt, Cheerfulness is a very high quality but it does not always stay with us. What is the way so that man may always be cheerful?

The Way of Cheerfulness

To have a 'laughing' face, we have to be as a swan is. The swan, it is said, picks pearls, i.e. takes the milk of a thing, leaving the water. In the same way, if man's eyes saw only the good qualities, leaving the bad ones aside, if he gave up listening to futile, watery talk, taking to the milk of divine knowledge, if his Reason worked like a swan and not like a crow or a crane, he would always be cheerful. If man thinks over it again and again, he will understand that when anyone retains, in his mind, the knowledge of a person's defects or allows his intellect to harbour the not-so-good actions of others and, thus, giving the go-by to Reason, behaves like a hypocrite as the Crow is known to be, or like a cunning hermit that the crane (*Bagula*) symbolises, all his delight will be gone in no time. So, the wise man should always remember that he is a swan in the audience of God, the Supreme Swan, and should take to pearls only. He is a Rajyogi, call him the *Rājhaṅs*—ruler of swans—and he has to search for and acquire true milk and not touch mere water. He who acts like a swan, has always a genial countenance.

One can say from experience that he regards himself as a *Rājhaṅs*, the ruler of swan and thus tries to be always of good cheer, but the present, Iron-aged world has strange things in store for us and, so, our happiness is never stable. One would therefore, like to know if there is anything else that God Shiva has vouchsafed to enable us to be cheerful.

Why does Cheerfulness disappear?

Just as remembrance of God, i.e. Yoga, gives us joy, so does one kind of vice or another or a mistake of ours causes the disappearance of that joy. Hence, if and when a useless thought strikes one, as it were, unaccountably, one should ward it off or place this confusing situation before one of the seniors¹ or Shiva Baba² for the purpose of treating this

1. A Brahma Kumari or a Brahma Kumar.

2. The Almighty God through His medium.

diseased state of mind in the shortest possible time and of getting instructions, directions, etc. to avert the recurrence of lapses of this kind and, thereby, also lighten the weight off one's chest.

Also, let us remember that it is no use continuing to cogitate over a lapse that has already occurred, while saying to ourselves that, unfortunately, we make mistakes and our spiritual state is not satisfactory. Pondering in this manner will not only wash out the lapse but will increase the duration of mental pain due to this lapse. So, we should abandon thinking over a slip or an omission, resolve firmly not to let it be repeated and march ahead. To be burdened with the sense of impropriety is in itself a lapse from normality. A deficiency can be made good not by worrying over it but by thinking of the completely evolved state of self. Hence, we should never cease to try to see that the course of *Buddhi* (Intellect) is always clear, that it does not get lost in confusion and that there is no obstacle in the form of any vicious thought. Therefore, to guard ourselves against such contingencies, the lamp of divine remembrance should be supplied constantly with oil in the form of divine knowledge.

Banish Jealousy, anger and hatred

There is diminishing of happiness when any thought of envy or hatred creeps in. But when the wise man feels the on coming of such a feeling, he should remember that it portends his fall. Greatness consists in philanthropy, large-heartedness, magnanimity and good-will towards all. Every soul has been playing its individual part from times beyond memory. Anyone can, by dint of efforts, or, as a result of his past actions, rise high, and when we have before us an instance of a person higher than us in life, we should say to ourselves: "He has done a great deed by virtue of which he has risen to this high rank, and I shall also do my best to rise but I should not compare with him." Here in this world, each soul has its own role to act; all cannot be alike. Envying others or looking maliciously at them is not going to diminish their good fortune nor increase our own. On the contrary, a disgruntled man causes decline in his own case by falling low in life. If there is discontent, his spiritual progress and his yoga are retarded. So, when we see anyone rising high, the right thing to do is to try to raise our level by our own effort and exercise tolerance and fortitude and be sweet in our dealings with him. If we are happy to see others rise high and are sweet to them, such this attitude of ours will prove of help to lead us upward and

without giving rise to pain and ill-will. We should discard jealousy, but we may compete with them.

Similarly does anger harm, to a greater or less extent, when it enters the mind? We should then think that anger is like a big monster, who ruffles us of the treasures of divine knowledge and happiness and has, therefore, to be got rid of sooner than later. Only by keeping the mind safe from vices will happiness stay and manifest itself on the countenance which is the mirror.

GREED GENERATES RESTLESSNESS

A GREEDY person is always disgruntled and dissatisfied, for his craving can never be subdued. Such one is, therefore, never happy in the village or in town, in day-time or in night. Having built a house, he begins to think of building another. Having purchased a car, he is anxious to have a car each for his children. Now that he is a rich man, he is smitten with the desire of being a high financier. He is never contented. Hence, it is wrong to consider him to be having real peace and inner solace.

A greedy person is very jealous of others. He regards another person's wealth and gains as greater than his own and, naturally, he is uneasy. He is not only envious of but inimical to him who was once equal to him but has now become a big *Sahukār*.¹ Can he, who is always burning with jealousy and enmity, ever achieve true happiness?

Unhappy Lot

There is another thing to consider. At first, there may be in him the greed for wealth, but, gradually, this greed becomes unbounded in the sense that, besides wealth, it makes him lay hands on other things. Suppose a man has become rich owing to his greed. You will observe that he wishes to command respect—more respect than before—from his friends and relatives, so that greed of wealth and of prestige forms part of him. Next, he wishes to marry his son in a family where there is the prospect of getting a huge dowry, lest people should say that he, a very big merchant, has brought a poor man's daughter as his son's bride. He is now wrapped up in pride. He thinks that he is a big *Sethi* and, as such, should have attained relationships with families equal to his and, at the same time, be respected by his friends and relatives. Thus, he whose greed is ever on the increase, and in whom, as a result of that, there arise the feelings of self-love, hostility, arrogance and other allied things, cannot be considered to be a happy lot.

No doubt, a greedy person collects, for his use all the pleasures and amenities of the world, but he is always lacking the treasure that there is in contentment. In the absence of peace, all the grand things of the world are simply a burden for him. If man possessed all the means of enjoyment but not contentment, he is likely to be lost for ever in their midst and ceases to be truly enjoying life. That is why the saying goes: "Man does not really enjoy pleasures but the things which he thinks give pleasure to him, eat up all his bodily strength and even his tenure of life".¹ Hence, the more intense the greed, the deeper the discontent. He loses sleep because, even in his sleep, he is thinking only of making money. Greed deserves, therefore, to be shunned.

Greed generates restlessness

But that does not mean that we should not earn money which is necessary for a human being to have. It is the hunger for wealth that is bad. By means of adulteration, window-dressing, acquiring wealth by foul and clandestine means, under-weighing, charging exorbitant rates, under-paying labourers, harming other's business interests, a greedy person manages to acquire as much wealth as he can. But because he is craving for more and more, he is always a poor one. The result is that greed generates restlessness only, and, as days pass by, he is here, in this very world, handled by a Govt. inspector or in a court of law or, else, most unmistakably he is there in the dock of the *Dharmarāj's* Court.

Hence, man should always earn by honest means, thereby acquiring spirituality which strengthens his love of God. On the contrary, he who is prompted by greed of money even in his sleep, cannot forge any link of love with Him. During his meditation on God, which really is not meditation as he is reminded of self, he can never have the real happiness of a real Yogi. Thus, one can easily understand that, in order to keep body and soul together one has to work in order to obtain the necessary means but it is very bad to run after material things and, in the process, be further and further away from God. Money is a means and not an end. So, it is not wise to be always thinking of it, wasting all our precious life-time in quest of it. One should ask himself: "Even when unlimited wealth is amassed, can one be sure of living long enough to enjoy it? And now that the signs of world destruction are distinctly observed, of what use would greediness be?"

1. मनुष्य भोगों को नहीं भोगता बल्कि भोग ही उसे भोग लेते हैं।

Sublimation of the Proclivity of covetousness

Very often it is that man thinks of earning abundant wealth now and worshipping God later in his old age but has ever man given up greed in old age? No. Having been all along greedy, he has this disposition as part of his nature. Hence, there is a well-known saying: 'While man becomes old, his greed becomes youthful.'¹ Only by giving up here and now you will be able to get rid of it. Otherwise, it will grow in size and strength by, as it were, feeding it. Hence, it is but proper for man to look to the world-destruction that is soon coming. The world is now in its fourth, i.e. the last stage as we are now passing the last part of *Kaliyuga*. From this point of view, all of us are, philosophically speaking in old age and, so, we ought to dedicate our mind to the remembrance of the Supreme Soul.

Besides this, there is another point to consider. The greedy man cannot amass as much as will provide him happiness that may last him many lives. The riches of today are nothing when compared with the wealth, ease and happiness of *Satyuga*. Now that man has learnt that lasting great happiness, which marks *Satyuga*, is based on purity and divine virtues, which man has acquired by means of yoga or link with God in *Sangam yuga*, he should put in his best efforts to be equipped with holiness and high virtue. The proclivity of covetousness should be employed to amass the wealth of Divine knowledge, virtues and Yoga.

A Loser ultimately

A greedy person has neither contentment, nor the habit of renunciation. He has neither detachment nor the spirit of service, neither the ability to withdraw nor spiritual outlook nor other allied divine virtues. He who does not possess all these virtues, cannot become righteous enough to be a deity, and cannot, therefore, have the right to enjoy heavenly happiness. Only he achieves the happiness of *Sarga* (The paradise established by the Supreme Soul) who loves Him and has goodwill for all His creatures. The greedy man's mind is always attached to the idea of making money even though it may harm others; so, he cannot have real happiness. Bearing all this in mind, man should become a yogi and acquire divine qualities so that he may have happiness that there is in the righteous world.

The hunger for peace can be satisfied by drinking the nectar of Divine knowledge, whereas the fires of lust and anger never die even

after man's death but reduce evrey existence of his to ashes. Such a one is like a miser, himself in grief and out to harm others, whereas he who is not ravenous, is always happy, and that is God's law and gift.

VIRTUE IS WEALTH

PEOPLE in *Dwāpur yuga*, i.e., the third epoch in the world cycle, were far less greedy and more righteous than those living today are. There is an illustrative story in this regard. It says, that, once upon a time, a farmer sold a piece of land to another farmer. While the latter was tilling the earth, he unearthed a pot which was full of golden ornaments. He took the pot to the former and said, "My friend, this pot, full of gold, has been got from the piece of land, I bought from you. Please have this pot as I have paid you for the land only and not for this gold to which I have no claim".

The seller then replied, "My dear friend, I won't and can't have it because I have sold off the land, and, therefore, all that the land would yield, belongs to you. I have nothing to do with what the land may now give you".

Both stuck to their respective points, neither of them being ready to take possession of the pot or its contents.

They go to the King

Both, therefore, approached the ruler of the State and submitted their case to him.

The seller said, "My lord, as I have sold off the land, I have no right to it".

The purchaser, in his turn, said, "Our great lord, I have paid for the land but not for the gold in this pot which I cannot, therefore, morally have".

The King reflected deeply over the matter, but was in a fix what to say. Well, both the sides were right enough. Much could be said on both the sides. Seeing the king lost in thoughts, both suggested that it be deposited in the State Treasury. The King didn't somehow like the idea, and turned in upon them, saying, "You are wrong, the King has no right to eat the gold his own. Both of you wish to be free from sin, who should you burden me or the State with it? If you are not prepared to lose what does not rightfully belong to you, who should you expect th-

king to accept it? I cannot put into the treasury what does not belong to the State for, otherwise, it would cause sufferings to my subjects which are as dear to me as my children". Thus, no one was prepared to accept what was not theirs! Then how to resolve the strange kind of dispute?

Further discussion revealed that the daughter of one farmer was betrothed to the son of the other farmer. And, in a trice, the Rājā gave his verdict that the pot in question be given away in dowry. This judgment satisfied both as both would eventually benefit by it and in a rightful manner too.

Times have changed

Now you can compare that Age with the present one. The man of to-day seems to have drawn aside from the course of this endeavour. Time there was when no thefts occurred, houses lay open without locks and law-suits were very very rare. But, now-a-days, the courts have to deal with innumerable cases pertaining to acquirement of wealth. In spite of the increase in number of courts, hearings are held after long intervals and still longer periods does it take for decisions to be arrived at. The situation, today, is so grim that, if two pedestrians notice a one-rupee note lying on the road, there will be a scramble between them. Each will lay claim to this one rupee. It is, therefore, plain that, since greed entered man's outlook and habits, the good things of the world have become rare. Time there was when grain, milk and every thing was in abundance, but now, grain is purchased in small hand-bags and milk is got in bottles after long waiting in a queue.

The Moral

So, in order to have good days again, man should abandon avarice which characterises degraded people. Remember, he who considers himself God's child, will not be greedy.

If you ever think of becoming greedy, transfer this trend of thinking towards acquirement of more and more Godly Knowledge, virtues and gains in Yoga. These gains it is that will accompany us after death and make us wealthy for several lives. This wealth that subsists in divine knowledge, virtues and service to others, never dies because, by means of it, one obtains heavenly happiness to last for 21 successive lives. Healthy ideas lead to good health too. Honesty, sincerity and truthfulness are signs of good character whereas Greed, Self-aggrandisement, lack of consideration for others and crookedness lead one ultimately to grief and create rift and turmoil in the society.

CONTENTMENT—AS A PERSONAL AND A SOCIAL VIRTUE

IMAGINE two guests at one and the same place. Both have had their dinner. One of them says, "I never thought that we would have a dinner of this sort? Our host has made fools of us. For a simple, low meal, he has wasted our time. I won't tell him anything just now, in presence of others, but, tomorrow, I shall give him a bit of my mind...". The other person says, "No, friend, this is not right. Neither are we hungry for decent dinners nor he has invited us to display his wealth and position. He did whatever he could do and, so, the dinner indicates his regard for us. Think of his affection and friendliness that brought his invitation, and not of the dishes served at the dinner. You should not think that your time has been wasted. The dinner was but an excuse, the real object was to meet one another, to have a hearty talk and build the edifice of friendship on the foundations of love...".

Judge for yourself the vast difference there is between the discontented and the contented. The former marks defects and causes annoyance to himself and is thinking of spoiling the atmosphere by showing anger or even rebuking the others, whereas the latter focuses the former's attention on the host's good qualities and is, therefore, being happy in all conditions and thanks the host.

Discontent spoils relationship and also the atmosphere

You can now easily understand why people would like to be in the company of a contented man while they would give a wide berth to the dissatisfied person. Contentment makes friends whereas discontent breaks friendly ties. People would rather not have anything to do with him because he is indefensible. Hence, content links people with love whereas discontent just cuts up ties as a pair of scissors does.

The Example of a Potter and his wife

Suppose a potter has made pots or dolls of clay. All of a sudden there is a rainfall. He cries aloud, "I am ruined, unlucky that I am. These things won't dry, and I can't sell them or earn a penny. How can I feed

myself?" Thus, bewildered greatly, he talks angrily to his neighbours or members of his family, is displeased with Nature as also with his luck and thus, saddens others also. Instead of thinking out a solution by employing his reason, he loses courage and the ability to act and, like one confounded, sits supine.

His wife, on the other hand, tells him: "These days rains are needed. How else could one get grains? If the yield was low, stores in Mandis (markets) would be depleted. Can paper-money or currency notes feed us? Be happy over what has happened. Since you cannot avert the unavoidable, why should you fret and fume like a weakling? Well, the proper thing was to make the pots and put them in the sun long before. Whatever has happened, cannot be undone. Work, and have the contentment, disregarding all the rest. Concentrate your attention solely on what is to be done next. There is a vast scope for man to earn by hard work. I might work as scullery-maid or a domestic maid-servant of a landowner. You may also plan out for yourself. In all cases, be cheerful. Don't lose the jewel that cheerfulness is. Be up and doing. The atmosphere of the house has changed for the worse. Mark, how gloomy children have become!....."

Thus, you can clearly see the difference between the contented and the discontented one.

Today, man is so moulded as to be, to some extent, however small it be, dissatisfied, and, to that extent, cause a loss in his own happiness. The habit of losing temper is so common now-a-days that two persons meeting each other, ask each other how they are doing,¹ the implication being to find out if he is not in any way offended, annoyed or discontented. If his temper is ruffled, surely must his joy have decreased. Hence, the enquiry about how one is doing. The other man might say, "All is well". Rendered literally, it means that, as everything is in order, he is doing well. The conclusion is that to keep happy, one is to keep away from discontentment.

It can be understood that Contentment is a personal and a social virtue. It is the greatest among all kinds of wealth. Man should always be contented in having spiritual happiness, because this is the best of all kinds of happiness and because contentment is the crest-jewel of all divine virtues. No doubt, man's all ornaments are valuable and beautifying, but the crown is such an ornament as is the symbol of his sovereignty. So is contentment the crown of all virtues because a man who possesses contentment is as happy as a ruler, nay more happy

1. क्यों जी खुश-राजी हो? क्यों जी प्रसन्न हो?

than him. For, there are cases of rulers who, though possessed of immense wealth, are bereft of real happiness, but the contented individual is a ruler by spiritual rights, because the source of his happiness never runs dry. Even if he may not be having certain material comforts and things, people will easily judge (from the contentment that shines in him) that he does not lack in anything. Even an impecunious man would pity a king in whom instability in happiness is evident. The treasures that a sovereign possesses may be meant to keep him happy but these may not make others happy. But contentment is a treasure which gives happiness not only to the man who possesses it but also to others who come into contact with him. But how does contentment come?

Free from Desires

Verily, only that man is contented whom desires and longings do not trouble. Thus, in the case of a contented man, the question of non-fulfilment of desires or dissatisfaction does not arise, as he has no desires as such. There is no question of sorrow in his life, because sorrow has its origin in the feeling of dissatisfaction. Thus, it is clear that the contented man is never sad or troubled, because he is unattached, has no desires and his habits and outlook are suffused with solace and, hence, are unchanging.

How does he make others happy?

Now let us take up the question : How people derive happiness from a contented man? Obviously, in his company, people are happy because he keeps up their spirits when there is a crisis, makes them experience spiritual happiness by means of cheering words, by setting at rest their desires that had been agitating them from within and quenching their thirst for inner peace. Those who come in contact with him have no fears that he might feel offended with them. Thus, they deal with him without reservations and with a cheerful heart, because they know that he is ever satisfied and is calm and does not mind small things. He does not make them attend to himself, rather, he sets them at ease, because they do not have to think of whether he does not mind want of due attention or whether he does not mind what happens in respect of the treatment he receives from them.

In fact, the word 'contentment' itself, when uttered, brings peace to the mind and fills us with love of it so that we desire to acquire this virtue. Reason and experience both testify that contentment and peace

go together. Thus, satisfaction and cheerfulness in all situations, and freedom from desire or attachment, are great qualities. Now let us see the signs of a discontented man.

The Marks of a Discontented Man

He who remains dissatisfied, finds fault with the way things happen or with one shortcoming or the other in anyone, then feels sad, disappointed, wretched and, as it were, weary. You may have been very good to him several times before and done service to him one way or the other, but, if at the present moment, there is a slight deficiency or a lapse on your part, he will be dissatisfied and displeased with you. The defect may have been there without your causing it deliberately, but service done by you to him in the past is easily forgotten by him. Take another case. Suppose he is healthy and intelligent and has friends who are good-natured and are on good terms with him, but he is a little short of money. You will find that he ignores all the good things he has and would, because of this little monetary difficulty alone, lose temper, or be sad, or be weary of life.

Take another example. Suppose you spend some time every day with a certain man, entertain him with your company and with the means at your disposal, and help him if need be. You have followed this schedule for several years, but if your attention to-day has been drawn to a guest who has come at your place, he will not try to understand your situation and its demands but, swayed by self-interest, he will be displeased with you and will reproach you for having forgotten him, having paid little attention to him and having disregarded him.

One salient point is that he is too much inclined to pick holes in other people's coats and is inclined very little to mark the good points in them, of success and achievement and, thus, proves himself generally discontented. The other point is that he, who is goaded by selfish motives, tries to gain as much authority as he can. He does not bear the sight of another person rising high. One who compares what he has with others' achievements, and, instead of removing his own shortcomings, longs for more and more, such a one is always dissatisfied. There is another notable case of discontent. When anyone is involved in a situation, or a bond, or faces an unavoidable contingency which he cannot face, he also is disgruntled.

A Dis-satisfied Man Spoils the Atmosphere

Dissatisfaction with a person's habits and ways makes one angry with that person whose very presence irritates him. Anyone faced with

a bad situation and rendered, as it were, helpless, might feel exasperated and even bewildered and sad. In him there appears to be a decline in zest. In short, man becomes discontented because of his own *samskāras* and shortcomings, and exposes his own want of courage and enthusiasm.

When a man is dissatisfied with anyone for one reason or the other, he, invariably, brings currents of sadness and disappointment in the atmosphere, and denigrates one person or another, and, because he is in the habit of getting annoyed very often, he creates problems for others. Instead of conversing with others on the subject of virtues or of divine knowledge, he talks of his own dissatisfaction, succeeds only in being a kill-joy and increases the load of sins he is already carrying. Take, for example, the case of a chronic patient who being discontented with his physical health, is always bemoaning. You will find that wherever he goes and with whom-so-ever he speaks, he, instead of conversing on God, begins to say: "Dear friend, I am greatly perturbed as in my arms and joints there is continuous pain. It appears that my body is not co-operating with me, unlucky that I am..."

Talk of this kind takes the listeners easily towards body-consciousness and, hence, away from thoughts of God. On the contrary, he who is contented in all conditions and times, will not talk in this strain even when he is physically down with illness, but will say, "My dear friend, I am well enough. This body has its own accounts to settle and that is being done, Disturbance of one kind or another in this iron-aged and degenerate body will be going on. Let us not think of this old body. Let's talk about other things. Please tell me what are the sayings of God issued to us, souls, these days, by Him. Believe me, I am truly lucky. The body is diseased no doubt, but my soul is engaged in sucking in the sweetness that lies in contemplation of God..."

Thus, it has been made clear to you that the marks of a discontented man are: gloom, anger, want of endurance, a sense of weariness of the world, lack of enthusiasm but abundance of harsh and contemptuous speech, expressing his displeasure and fretfulness and, consequently, his mood of non-co-operation. Such a one will, obviously, be bereft of joy and will introduce gloom in the atmosphere.

The discontented man gets confused

Besides being morose, a discontented man appears to be confused, and says now and again: "I am in a fix what to do. See the circumstances I am placed in, the needs I have to fulfil and the persons I

have to work with...". Being dissatisfied with the conditions and his associates, he is lost in thoughts of these very persons and things, and, instead of collecting and employing all the available means and all his powers, he always expresses his inability to do things, repeating again and again that he does not know what to do.

Clearly, he is confused and cannot make use of the few means available to him, or turn to account whatever little there be of use to him in a certain set of circumstances. Small difficulties, light bonds, trifling events are magnified by him out of all proportion, and powerful means, even very high achievements are considered by him to be of no consequence. He underestimates goodness and success but overestimates defects and obstructions. That is why it is said that he who is content, has always good name to hand. That means that he has the goodness in him to increase the flavour of his achievements, whereas the discontented man has lost the power to retain, not to speak of increasing what he has already got. Because of lack of geniality and divinity in him, he cannot value what he has got; though it be ever so little, he does not speak of it in noble and glorious terms or expatiate on it. If the contented man has only one good thing, it would appear from his looks or speech that he has numerous such things. Therefore, those who hear him, feel encouraged to join him in his enterprise. But, the disgruntled man may have ever so many nice things, but he behaves like a pauper or like one reduced to straits. The former does not allow himself to be hard-pressed whereas the latter makes a mountain of a mole-hill.

A man once said to me, "All this that you generally say about Contentment appeals to me : I wish to make a resolve not to lose but to acquire, even if it be small parts, this quality of contentment, which is the best of all qualities. Whatever be the circumstances or whatever the necessity of carrying on with people of low nature or low calibre, I shall, at all costs, not take to anger, reproach, weariness, impatience with events, etc., etc. So, please let me know a few such easy methods as will make me to tide over a difficulty and will enable me to hold on securely to this idea". He further said, "Let me tell you frankly that I don't feel happy over the nature and tendencies of people with whom I come into contact. Suppose a man does not make good arrangement on an important occasion, is not punctual, overlooks the essentials or does not make the desired procedural changes or improvements in spite of being told that these are necessary. I notice several other defects, which jar on my feelings and there arises in me, as it were, a cyclone, in the

form of dissatisfaction. Being dissatisfied with him not once but several times, I begin to hate him. I don't like the looks of him and am besides myself with anger. I try to set him right, but in vain. My disappointment grows because things cannot improve. What is to be done in such situations?"

I told the man, "You should not lose sight of the fact that this world of human beings is a variety drama or a Tree of various hues and forms. People of various kinds and ways are here to be found, possessing various dispositions and habits. In the present day world of sin, everyone acts under the influence of his bad tendencies. When you realise that others are also goaded by their individual tendencies, your mind will not be convulsed".

I further said to him, "The one whom you want to set right, does not change easily in spite of your efforts because his *Samskāras* are firmly rooted in him. In you too there is set well the *Samskāra* of dissatisfaction, owing to which you are not pleased with him. Why don't you abandon this habit of getting into a huff? With your hand on your heart, ask yourself if there are not any *Samskāras* in you which do not change easily and quickly and which, therefore, lead you to act in the way you have been acting. If you look at other from this angle, you will not fret or chafe, because you will understand that the world at present is under Maya's sway, that the mentality of all is unrighteous and that it will take time to bring about change. When you have not been able to change just a few of your pre-dispositions quickly enough, why should any unjustified hope of others' improvement land you in despair? You should not lose your happiness now by getting dissatisfied with him, but should instead try to offer him the gift of virtues and treat him politely. It is only when you throw off the weapon of Divine Knowledge and discard the power that there is in yoga that you lay yourself open to fits of discontent and begin to feel harassed by your environments".

He agreed with me and said that he will now try to put into practice the Divine Knowledge and Yoga and thus attain the precious virtue that contentment is.

THE EFFECT OF MIND ON ONE'S FOOD

OF late it is being realised that the mind has its own vibrations which colour the atmosphere. Every person is giving out some thought-waves, good or bad. Food is one of the things that takes colour from the mind's vibrations and is, consequently, influenced by them. Electricity is such a force that when anyone touches a naked but live wire or an electric 'Shoe', it grips him or shakes him off with a strange push. The attraction or repulsion of electricity is so strong that anyone in its grip loses hold on life. But if this very person touched a piece of wood all along, which is not a conductor, he would not fare so badly.

Similarly, you observe that a magnet has force enough to attract to itself iron pieces. But we cannot see with these eyes of ours where this force resides in the magnet. We know of this force and its presence by the way it acts on iron or on needles and we conclude that it attracts other bodies. Exactly in the same manner, we know the truth that mind acts on food either when we take it or this truth is understood by those who are gifted with divine wisdom or divine sight.

Scientists have demonstrated the existence of certain forces by means of experiments and their practical application in the world. But the mind is very very subtle and is another name for the faculties of the soul or its expression or manifestation in life. So, the question is, "How can one make people understand the effect of mind on Food?"

In this connection, one should remember that even scientists have now begun to admit the force there is in man's concentration and mental outlook. Some time ago there was in the newspapers the story of the application of this force by a Russian woman as given her to pressmen.

Miracles of Mental Power, reported in Newspapers

That piece of news came through Tass Agency and was broadcast from Moscow. A Russian woman, named Mikhilova, can stop the hands of a time-piece by merely looking at it. She demonstrated this to scientists and press-photographers. Sometimes, she would by this means, accelerate the movement of its hands or slacken it or, if she so willed, she stopped it altogether. A salt-case, a tumbler or an apple lying on the table

would begin to shake literally by dint of her keeping these in sight. Scientists and pressmen took photographs of this all. She went further. She fixed her gaze on a piece of bread which moved and then sprang up finding its resting-place in her mouth. The pan of the scales that received her favour, bent low, showing greater weight.

In the issue, dated the 28th March, 1968, of the 'Times of India' and that dated the 9th April, 1968, of 'The Indian Express', in addition to this item of news, it was mentioned that, generally, scientists do not rely on such appearances, but now they have begun reflecting on these. "At last, the Russian Government accepted this as a fact and declared that mental force does influence Matter". It is, therefore, worth one's while to ponder deeply if it is not possible for the three different currents or aspects of the mind, known all over as *Sattwa* (righteous), *Rājasa* (passionate) and *Tamas* (dark) to effect Matter where we have, before us, the example of one whose gaze and mind possess force enough to make matter dance like the piece of bread jumping from the table into her mouth and even the railway train coming to a stop at her will.

Not only does the story, related above, make it clear that the way one looks and thinks does influence Matter but those well-versed in spiritualism also say that there are several examples available. You may also have heard about such cases, one or two of which I am describing here.

An Anecdote

Once upon a time, a hermit, while passing by a village, noticed, in its suburbs, a well. He was very thirsty, and drew water by means of a rope and a bucket and drank it and passed on. Hardly had he gone a little distance when he thought that he might feel thirsty again and that, therefore, it was proper for him to carry this rope and the bucket with him, for who knows these two things might not be available at the next well. This thought drove him back and, picking up the things, he proceeded on his journey.

Having gone some distance, he felt remorse to think that he had renounced all his possessions but had now stolen those of others. He retraced his steps, placed the things (rope and the bucket) where they had been and reflected deeply why his conduct had become bad while he had previously not had any bad *Samskāras*. He asked people in the vicinity of the well as to who had got the well laid out and learnt that a thief in old age, had, for public use, got the well dug with the money he had amassed. The hermit then concluded that wealth amassed by theft has

such force that, even today, he was adversely affected by the water he had drunk.

There is a similar well-known story of a recluse who, having had food at a house whose inmates were foul-mouthed, did, in his sleep, utter abusive words to the surprise of his disciples. The sum and substance of all this is that the food one takes, does definitely leave its mark on one's thoughts and the general state of one's mind.

The custom of preparing offerings in a temple is guided by the consideration of this very truth. Householders go up to a priest with sweets or any other eatable, which he prayerfully offers to God by placing these in touch with the image. Both he and householders believe that deities are pure and viceless and by the very fact of their acceptance, not in a gross but subtle manner, what is offered becomes pure and therefore *Satyaguni* and will bestow on them purity, peace and bliss because it has taken the form of the deity's *Prasad*, i.e. blessing. People of all faiths do make offerings in their respective ways. This shows that, from very ancient times, it has been held that the mind influences food. And that is the reason why devotees lay great stress upon *Prasad* and regard it as so sanctified that they would readily ask for it themselves. If any part of it chances to fall on the ground, it is picked up with respect because they believe that it is made by the pure-hearted and then offered to God. This is not prepared by anyone who is overpowered by selfishness, attachment or who is under the sway of his senses or who has already taken it, but throughout the period of its preparation or distribution, there was proper remembrance of God.

God has taught us the lesson that the mind leaves its influence on the food; so, in respect of the food, we have to see what the state of the cook's mind is. Now-a-days, people see to it that the pots are clean; the clothes neat and the dishes properly covered so that nothing settles on it. While, therefore, cleanliness of this kind is necessary, mental purity of him who cooks it is equally, if not more, necessary. If he who cooks is dark-hearted (*Tamoguni*), does not observe chastity and whose *drishti*, vision or viewpoint is simply unrighteous, there is the possibility that the food thus prepared will, when taken, generate *samskāras* similar to his.

The importance of Sattwic vision

We have said above that one's eye should be civil and viewpoint should be taintless. What does this mean? Is the eye or the viewpoint going to affect the thing prepared?

Yes. The eyes are the windows of the mind. The soul resides in

the forehead, the eyes being the nearest to it. If the mind is angry, the eyes become red. If there is love in man's mind, it sparkles in them. If a man makes eyes at anyone or looks enviously at him, they say he looks with evil intentions or that his eyes show evil intentions. Hence, we learn that the soul's thoughts and feelings are manifested through the eyes. The news that the Russian woman affected, as the story goes in the case of the time-piece or the piece of bread, was due to her view-point and gaze. So it is that, through the eye, the mind or the soul acts on the food prepared.

Because people with religious faith believe this, they go up to a noble man with fruits, candy, sweets and other things and request him to bestow his favour on these things. They know that in the looks of a great and pure soul, there is a force which works. Some people go so far as to believe that if anyone looks greedily or enviously or in any way wickedly on the food placed before them, they consider that an evil eye has been cast on it. Thinking thus, they do not have it. While telling your friend about how you do, don't you say, "Dear friend, by your *Kripa Drishti* (blessing looks) or favour, I am doing well?" Similarly, to a high-souled man we say that, having cast his eyes on us, he has benefited us. All these are based on the idea that view-point or gaze is a force to be reckoned with.

So, in order the food to be congenial to spiritual advancement, the cook must have a pure mind. He should have good thoughts and his habits and outlook righteous. No vice should run its course in him. Neither with the sense of taste, attachment, anger nor under the influence of his senses or body-consciousness should he cook food. On the contrary, he should be soul-conscious, remember God, take it his duty to purify the minds of others and be all along cheerful while cooking food so that the souls of those who eat it, are truly benefited, their *Buddhi* becomes pure and their minds holy and peaceful. It should be noted that food cooked by any person, be it a man or a woman, who indulges in sexual gratification, who is prone to be angry or who does not practise absorption in the remembrance of God, is not spiritually wholesome (*sattwic*) put in pure.

Importance of Brahmacharya

Do we mean to say that food can be righteous or *Sāttwic* only when the cook observed *Brahmacharya* and other rules?

Yes, that is God's bidding.

By the observance of *Brahmacharya*, by offering our food in spirit

to the Supreme Soul and by being always in communion with Him, the unholy materials obtainable in *Kaliyuga* are rendered holy or sanctified. In the Gita, God says, "He who does not make his offering to God is like a thief; he is not chaste; he is a devil." The yogi's diet, habits and dealings should be orderly. True *Vaishnava* food—commonly called 'vegetarian food'—is that which is prepared in a state of spiritual communion. Hence, before you start your meal, you should steadily remember God, offer it to Him, regard yourself as a soul and look at it with a yogic vision and take it as if it is blessed by God.

Besides this, you should see that the money with which you buy the articles of food should have been earned by honest means.

In addition to the righteous quality of food, you should eat moderately and eat only when necessary. Eating very often and eating even when you don't need—these are outside the limit of proper food. The yogi should not be a slave to the palate, but should be self-controlled. He should understand that what he eats is got not him from his own kitchen but God's own store-house. Food should be taken as Shiva's boon with deep faith.

STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS AND HONESTY

A PERSON who is crooked, can never enjoy real peace of mind. He is lost in the labyrinth of his own devious and zigzag thoughts. His tricks tie him into their own knots. A straightforward and sweet man has a happy heart and is free from fear. He has many other good qualities of head and heart.

The actions of a straightforward man are as his professions are. He is not hypocritical. He has no use for show, cunning, or viles. Hence, people do not have to fear him; his talk is straight and pleasant. Even if he does or say anything that is not liked at the moment by others, they are not displeased with him so much as they would be with a crooked man because they know that he is artless and that he has not done this to deceive or to slight anybody. He has, on the other hand, simply expressed his views in his characteristically honest manner. Even if they expressed their displeasure at any of his statements, they must have begun thinking of this to some such effect as follows: "It is not right to be angry with him or express resentment over what he, a true-hearted, artless man, has said" They will, of their own accord, then make it up with him because his straightforwardness; truthfulness and uprightness attract them to him.

An honest man has contentment and other virtues

An honest individual is satisfied with himself as much as others are satisfied with him. If somehow, at any time, dissatisfaction arose in him, he will recover from it by dint of his honesty. On the contrary, he, whose ways are devious, always watches to see if there is not any trick or cunning or just show in what others say even if it may have been said with a good motive or for his good. The result is that this crooked person does not lay to heart what is said to him for the sake of his welfare. This accounts for very slow transformation, if at all there is any, in his *samskaras*.

In a straightforward man's mind, clean as it is, other divine virtues do easily find a place, whereas these cannot be implanted so soon easily in a crafty and crooked person's mind, which is already

in the meshes of one kind of evil or another. The crooked man, thus involved, might say to himself. "In the past, he was not on good terms with me. How can he do good to me now? If upto now he has not been good, how can he ever change in future?" But, the artless individual is happy in his own self and knows that man reaps as he sows. He would not, at any cost, lose his truthfulness. God, who is Truth, is pleased with the true-hearted, and so, God helps him. By the grace of God, the Supreme embodiment of Truth, the straightforward man is satisfied and happy because he has no ill-feeling for others nor is he affected by what they say or do; he has no mental conflicts and does not recall again and again, as the common run of mankind do, any body's behaviour in the past or his nature at present. On account of his truthfulness, gentleness and clean ways, he receives blessings and love from all. Thus, he is contented and happy with himself.

A straightforward and honest man is loved by all

People repose faith in a straightforward man and like his company because, from him, come vibrations of purity. He who is not of this type is avoided because he is considered tactful and clever. They think that whatever he says or does has a selfish motive behind it, and therefore, does not appeal to anybody. The clever hypocrite always thinks of serving his own ends, whereas the artless man considers himself fortunate if he is instrumental in making others happy. That is why he is loved by all and there is sweetness in his speech.

The saying that God is pleased with the truthful,¹ proves that straightforwardness and honesty are noble qualities and that God Himself blesses him who possesses these. And, as other virtues follow this one, it is regarded as the bringer-in of other virtues.

A crafty person cannot reform himself morally or spiritually

There is another good feature of it. If he has any defect in himself, he will plainly relate it to a more experienced person and hear from him such methods as would help eradicate it. But, the crafty person goes on thinking of whether he should not tell others of his defect, fearing that he might fall in their estimation. So he does not frankly talk about it to his teacher or preceptor or well-wisher. Reformation in his case is a difficult process. Hence, the virtue of being truthful is highly useful.

In order to acquire this virtue, man has, in the first place, to see that he does not retain in his mind the knowledge of the faults and

failings of others, as otherwise his mind will get tainted thereby and will cease to be clean and straight. In the second place, he has to remember that all are children of the Supreme Father, the Supreme Soul, who is the Seed of the world and he has, therefore, nothing to gain but everything to lose by craftiness. In the third place, the more guileless he is, the more pleased with him will Shiva Baba be, who is Himself the guileless¹ Supreme Lord. Lastly, he should not forget that his sincere dealing with people will determine their behaviour with him, and, if not today, then at least from tomorrow, they will begin being frank with him. Truthfulness and honesty influence people deeply and the truthful man has no fears but is ever happy; dancing² joyfully.

He, who is exceedingly clever, is usually oppressed and confused by his own useless thoughts and dreads Death most³; because he has been indulging in artificiality and display. In order, therefore, to be always happy, contented, fearless and stable, man must be straightforward and, having renounced trickery and the tendency to criticise others, must bring in harmony between his profession and actions, and also between these two on one side and his intellect on the other.

1. भोक्तृनाथ 2. नच तो नच
3. बहुत चतुराई, धम धम भय।

INWARDLINESS IS THE PATH TO INNER PEACE

IF one looks in the daily routine of man now-a-days, one will observe that he is, as his dealings indicate, the slave of his senses and the liegeman of *Maya*¹, even though in his prayers, he says that he is servant of God² who is his Master. Sometimes, his palate reminds him of the taste of a certain kind and, by holding him in leash, tempts him to its fold. At other times, his eyes deceive him into mad pursuit of an earthly material thing or person, or he is enticed by name and form. It may be his ears that hear, with interest, gossip about one person or another, or it may be his own mouth, the organ of speech, that indulges in the hobby of tittle-tattle. Being thus engaged the whole day in the affairs of the senses, he forgets his real self. In other words, the soul, i.e., his real self that resides in his forehead is not remembered at all.

Consequently, his mind does not *look inwards* on his self, i.e., the soul, not to speak of resting there, runs after the thoughts of a lovely dish or get busy framing his body in bright accoutrements, or wanders about the regions where the cinema makes eyes at him. So, it is one thing or another that he is thinking of. He does not fix his attention, even for one short hour, on the soul in him, not to speak of sucking in spiritual happiness. In short, he does not look inwards but outwards. Such a one never attains state of stable peace. Hence, man should learn to be looking inwards. Inwardliness or what is called *Antarmukhta*³ is the source of all divine virtues. Proper attention to this should bring in other virtues.

One would like to know it more clearly why this quality is called *Antarmukhta* and what is the object of cultivating it in ourselves.

Why is inwardliness called *Antarmukhta* ?

The face is the most important part of the body. In this part, there lies the brain by means of which we think; here lies the organ of sight,

1. भ्रमिणी या मयम श्रेय मया या मयिना।

2. दधुं यो नै मया दम मयिना।

3. The word literally means : Inside the face.

hearing, speech, eating and the like. These organs are important. By means of these, if man does good deeds, he earns happiness and if he thinks of evil, looks at things with feelings of desire, anger, greed, attachment or arrogance, hears with his ears indecent or degrading talk, utters harsh or provocative words, or gets addicted to the pleasures of the palate, he becomes a babe to sorrow. So, he, who does not know the self, i.e. soul that is in the body, or, even if he knew it, forgets it, wastes his life in gratification of the senses, whereas, he, who knows and remembers that he is not a body but a soul that is in the body, speaks, hears, thinks, sees and does every other thing in a unique manner. He works with himself, duly stabilised. And, therefore, he is metaphorically regarded as having his face turned inward.

To sum up, the object of looking inwards is that, by means of the various organs, situated in the face, man should see and hear only those things, speak only those words and eat only those things which are conducive to the improvement of the soul, residing in the body. Nothing should be done with our back turned on the indwelling soul. The instruction that we should not hear, talk, see or think evil, is part of the process of inwardliness. Turning one's face away means want of attention, and that leads to indifference whereas facing anyone would indicate attention. We have hence to attend to the soul and think of its uplift.

What does 'inwardliness' really mean?

In fact inwardliness implies that we should have, in mind, the consciousness of our real self, i.e., the soul. For instance, when we observe the scenes in the external world around us, we should not get lost in them but should remember that it is the self or the soul that is in our body that sees all these scenes. The eyes are like a camera or lens. They reflect on the brain a picture of the thing seen, but we, i.e. the souls, are conscient entities and are their master. When we speak through the mouth, we should remember that our mouth is like a microphone. The inner self, i.e. the soul, speaks through the oral organ. Thus, in all our doing, we should not regard ourselves as a body but as a soul residing in the forehead which is situated in the upper part of the face. So, 'inwardliness' means: soul-consciousness, which points to the state of detachment from the body even while one makes active the body.

Redirection of thought

Secondly, this virtue has another aspect. Whatever

through our sense-organs, should be made applicable to the soul, I see my house and I should, at once, feel that the soul's home is really *Paramdhām*. The sight of a motor car should inspire me with the feeling that the body is like a car and I, the soul, something distinct from the body, am its driver. It is a matter of common observation that man is, now-a-days, in the habit of looking outwards. Through the agency of his senses, his mind moves from one object to another in the external world, without even once thinking of returning to the self or soul which is inside the face. Thus, man has forgotten his self and his Father and become unhappy by running after one object or another. Therefore, it is necessary to be looking inwards.

Withdrawal from the body

Thirdly, there is another way of looking at this virtue. After having done what is needed, one should rest in the contemplation of the soul. Now-a-days, man has extended his activities so much that he cannot re-assemble all his sense-organs and be stabilised in the soul. Whereas the wise and the spiritually inclined man's duty is not only to remember that he is a soul, even when he is engaged in his daily routine, but also to see that he does not waste his time in useless, long-winded talk or futile exercises of his mind. He should do only what his duty is, and having done it, should draw in his sense-organs as a tortoise does squeeze itself into its shell and, freeing himself from all cognition of the body, find rest in contemplation of the soul.

Lastly, this virtue has yet another aspect. Man should always check his mind and reason in order to see if any vicious thought has crept in. Those who look outwards, do not attend to this side of their life. They are ever-ready to act with their sense-organs and observe the external world. They have, as it were, turned their attention away from what is happening in the soul or from asking themselves whether any vice has not crept in.

To sum up, we will say the following in answer to a spiritual seeker who asks: "What is the practical way to keep our mind clean of bad thoughts and to be introvert in this world where many evil forces are at work?"

The Answer

While you are going through your daily routine, consider yourself to be a soul which is a self-luminous point or, in other words, a star

residing in your forehead. In your dealings with others, please mark that they also are souls; see the souls and remember that you are all brother souls, children of Shiva, the Incorporeal Supreme Father. Be firmly posted in this belief and then deal with them. Your viewpoint, outlook, memory and faith having been thus framed, your faculty of judgment will work well. You will look at them spiritually, i.e., differently from the common run of mankind and will not be inclined to be swept off your feet by them even though you be living here in the material world, hearing and seeing things. "I am but a point of light"—this is enough to rid you of the externals. All the appurtenances are wiped off and man rests in the contemplation of only One.

One may ask: "Can the memory of a Point-of-Light (God) stay with us in office, at the shop, at home or in the market?"

The answer is: "yes". If man keeps his eye of knowledge open, it is possible to be introspective. But, if he shuts this eye, even though the other two eyes of the body are open, it would not be possible to achieve this quality.

What is meant by keeping the 'Eye of Knowledge' open

With the two physical eyes, one can see the physical world along with those bodied beings who live in it and also material things. If, besides these two eyes, you use the Eye of Knowledge,¹ the soul, the Supreme Soul, the Supreme Abode of souls, Religion, Salvation, Beatitude and the like will not remain shut from your vision. Possession of the eye of knowledge connotes that you have understood that, in every body, there is a soul and that, at the present time, *Kaliyuga*, is passing through its very last part i.e. *Sangam yuga* is on and *Satyuga*, for whose coming we have to work by becoming holy and yogi, will soon be here. If you act up this knowledge, you may take it that the 'third eye' has been opened. There are people who lay by money in their coffers, never investing it or benefiting from it. Similarly, there are those who just keep this knowledge locked in the coffers of their intellect (*Buddhi*) and thus let it be unused. These latter illustrate what is meant by closing the eye of knowledge.

Thus is it that we can maintain the state of purity and inwardliness by keeping this eye open. For instance, while proceeding towards home, you will see, after sometime, the picture of your place appearing before you and both eyes, which are naturally open at that time, will see that. In the same way, if your eye of knowledge is open, you will be able

¹ The Third Eye.

to see your spiritual home and your Soul-Father and this will enable you to be pure.

Contrast

The saints and *Sādhus*, of the *Bhakti* cult, generally say thus about inwardliness: "Shut both ears, cover the two eyes with the four fingers each and then meditate; you will hear sweet, subtle sounds, as of a bell and, later you will hear *Anhad Nāād*² and see light also."

This introspection taught by *Sādhus* and saints, who are but human beings, is the one popular in what is called *Bhakti Mārga*. But, the way shown by God is that of *Gyān*³ which may be called the way of yoga, which Shiva, the knowledgeable Supreme Soul, has taught us. That pronounced by *sādhus* needs man to do purely physical actions, like that of placing one's hand on one's mouth in a specific manner. But we should ask ourselves: If a voice from the inside is heard, should we regard it as any kind of *spiritual* effort? Can it lead to development of divine qualities. How can we count it among the virtues? Well, by shutting one's eyes or by rubbing them, one might see a light, but, is this going to make us *devatās* i.e., deities? How long can one continue shutting one's eyes and ears, and all for a purely physical act?" Moreover, the light one sees or the sound one hears in this manner has nothing to do with the soul or God.

How can one be inward-looking under the present circumstances?

Now, one may ask: "The atmosphere today is vitiated very greatly. The whole of man's attention is drawn towards pomp and ornaments, so excessive, their demands are. Wherever you go, you meet noise and crowds. Nowhere is to be found the climate of peace and solitude. How can one, under these conditions, ever be inward-looking?"

Shiva Baba has explained to us these things very well. The excessive artificiality, the outward show, the polish or the glory that you see around you is the pomp and panorama of what is called *Māyā*. Excess, leads to decay. You should understand that this the tail-piece of *Māyā*, the last flickers of the lamp. Exactly similar is the condition of the world at present. Nowhere in all this gaudiness do you see any trace, however slight, of divinity or noble ways. On the contrary, you see vice of one kind or another prompting this show. These are simply strange, tempting

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1. Those who have devotion towards God but no Knowledge of Him.
 2. Special sound inside the body
 3. Devotion-based on right understanding or Knowledge.

shapes of *Māyā*. We should not get entangled in this quickly decaying and degrading show.

Hence, by thinking that the limit has been reached, man should detach himself from this show and thus experience ease and comfort in finding rest in the knowledge of God.¹ This is solitude in the true sense of the term. You say that there is no scope for solitude and seclusion in this world of noise and show. I say that you can certainly have solitude only when you have full knowledge of God and also have the realisation that the end of the world is approaching.

Besides this, Shiva Baba has given us the knowledge of heavenly happiness. All the paraphernalia of today is dirt when compared with what we find in *Swarga*², where there are palaces, fountains, orchards, fruits, food, happiness and even excellent goods, servants, birds and animals but everything is *Sattwaguni*. Where is the paradisiac *sāttwicā*, wholesomeness, and juiciness in things of today? Our bodies lack health, natural beauty, strength and endurance of yore. Looking at it in any way, all modern luxuries, pleasures, perfumes, splendour of various kinds and entertainments are unrighteous and are like the sapless bark of sugarcane in comparison with the enjoyments we have in heaven which Shiva Baba is re-establishing for us. If one keeps this truth in mind, one will feel detached from the world and will not be attracted by the pomp and show of things that are on the verge of destruction. Thus, vices will not touch him and he will be inward-looking.

¹ '१३०' का प्रयोग है 'सुख' की 'सुख' है। 2. Heaven

WAR DOES NOT SOLVE PROBLEMS

WAR has never solved any problem. It leaves behind it hatred and spirit of revenge in the mind of the vanquished and gives rise to pride and vanity in the mind of one who conquers. So, the lull after the war should not be taken as an era of real peace but it is just like the lull before a storm. Not very long ago, Ashoka, a king of India, learnt after a great battle, that war causes much suffering on either side and gives rise to many other problems. Alexander, the great conqueror, also realised this in the end and, so, when he was down with serious illness, he said to his Generals: "When I am dead, let my hands be out of the coffin so that the people can see that I am leaving this world empty-handed. All my loot and plunder, all the territory I conquered, has been left behind." Mr. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the late President of America, who was once a Commander of the Allied Forces in the World War II and had seen the upheavels and ravages of war from close quarters, said, "Having been directly connected with war, I know what it really means in terms of human misery and I, therefore, now shun war."

But do the political leaders of today, who are men in seats of power, take this wise counsel? No, under pressure of public opinion or due to some compelling circumstances, man again decides to go in for war, overtly or covertly. This is the great weakness in man. Men and nations, can solve their problems only in a peaceful manner. But, though man has language as a potent means of expression and he has the intellect also to argue his case and to convince others yet man ultimately uses the ways of the animals who strike head against head. The difficulty with the animals is understandable because they do not have language and reason as their means to seek justice nor they have any developed system of jurisprudence. So, the lesson I learn from the history, is that man does not learn lesson from history.

WORLD'S PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

THERE are mainly six evils which are the root cause of all sufferings—be they economic, political, social or individual in their appearance. What are those six evils? War is one of the evils. The root cause of all wars is, in fact, anger. Anger is more harmful than even an earthquake. It causes huge devastation and takes a heavy toll of life and is a barbarous thing too. It is more fierce than even forest fire

The second evil is Greed. This is the root cause of all economic exploitation. There is no dearth of resources and wealth in the world but it is the unsatiable greed for more that causes great inequalities in the society.

The third is Sex-lust. The problem of over-population in many countries can be successfully encountered with, if man takes to restraint. Even addiction to drugs and hippy culture is partly due to lust for sex.

The fourth is Attachment—attachment to things and to people. It is this which brings about grief and sorrow and shocks of life. Because of Attachment, man loses his sense of proportion or justice.

The Pride or Ego is another great evil. It is this which motivates a person or people to take revenge or to dominate and subjugate others.

The sixth evil is laziness. It is actually this which is behind the poverty and backwardness—both material and spiritual. It has been rightly said that "sloth has ruined many a nation."

These six evils give rise to other vices also. Hatred, jealousy etc. are their offshoots. These vices exist at all levels and all aspects of society—individual, family, national, as well as in the political, economic and social aspects.

How did these vices arise? They came about through illusion or ignorance or through man thinking that he is the physical body. In other words, body consciousness is at the root of these all. What is the solution? Man must realise that he is a soul and that the physical body is only an assemblage of the instruments which the soul has for performing actions. In other words, "Soul-consciousness" can be realised through spiritual meditation. Spiritual meditation is a specific technique of

method of meditation which can be used by anyone, any time, anywhere, regardless of religious affiliation—Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu etc.

HOW TO CONQUER PRIDE ?

A man who was working as an engineer in a Government department had an appointment with me. He was expected any moment now because it was just the time he had asked for. I was collecting the papers scattered before me on my table. When I noticed him walking into the room with a hurried step, I gave him a comfortable seat and, after usual courtesies, said to him, "Now what can I do for you?"

The Visitor: I just wanted to know what Shiva Baba has suggested for a man like me. The trouble with me is that now and then a current of pain passes through my mind. Whenever I have this feeling, I find that something or the other to frustrate me has already happened. I have not reached a solution of this problem. I find that in such a state, the practice of yoga gets impeded.

Me: What do you think is this Frustration due to? Generally, one suffers frustration because of one's own pride or one's high ambitions.

Visitor: Undoubtedly, I am conceited. This makes me suffer. What is the remedy?

Me: Self conceit is extremely disconcerting. If you consider it a great vice, why don't you discard it? You throw rubbish or foul things out of your house without delay or hesitation; why have you given shelter to self conceit, which is very dangerous for a wise man? The greater the sense of vaunte in man, the lower he falls in the scale and the more keenly he also experiences his fall.

Visitor: Because it causes distress, I do have a wish to discard it. But I have not yet found release from it; now and then I fall into its clutches.

Me: Will you tell me what you are proud of?

Visitor: I'll give you an instance. If any energetic hand in the office asserts his efficiency, I begin to argue my greater efficiency. If any relative makes a show of his wealth, directly or indirectly, I turn in upon him and say, "You think too highly of yourself, we do not beg of you to do this and that, we are not unworthy or lower than you." Another might try to outdo me efforts because he is physically strong or because he holds a position in office, but in my case, there is a dash and I say, "You may do

whatever you like. You think you are a bigwig". But when he tries to harm me in any manner, I am distressed. To my children, I talk haughtily and say, "You are in your teens, mind you!" I believe that they should absolutely and, in all cases, be obedient to me. When they do not listen to me, I feel scandalized and soon after think they are my children, but are worthless and disobedient ones. Thus, in one way or another, there is distress!

Me—When people talk big or parade themselves, you copy their behaviour and sing your greatness to yourself. Are you, even otherwise, intoxicated with the sense of your position?

Visitor—Yes, I must confess of being proud of my position. If I engage a labourer at home, I begin to feel that there is, no doubt, an element of haughtiness in my dealings with him because I think, I am richer than he and, so, I am proud of my greatness. Even when my neighbours complain against my children, I am somewhat conscious of my physical strength and youth. Similarly, I feel that I am wise.

Me—But, in truth, all a man's pride, whatever from it takes in life, has no foundation; it is hollow. Today a man might be rich, tomorrow he suffers a heavy loss or is rifled by burglars or his shop is set on fire. A rich man of today loses all in a fire and is reduced to penury and, later on, to beggary. One who has a sturdy body may break his leg tomorrow by an accident, the pain being intolerable; he may be afflicted with a disease or over-powered with old age which confines him to his bed unattended and miserable!!! He is today beautiful and very intelligent but suddenly some worry or ailment takes hold of him and health and beauty begin to disappear and he becomes ugly, weak and good-for-nothing. He who considers himself possessed of fine faculties, may behave in such manner as to be accused of a crime and sent to jail or, it may be that he is faced with a difficulty to solve for which he has to seek guidance and help from others. We thus learn that wealth, youth, physical strength, beauty and feats of intellect—all these are short-lived and leave man sooner or later. Then, what reason is there for man to take pride in any of these?

A pauper may in a trice become a millionaire. Rulers of olden days are today insolvent while several others have been caught in the clutches of old age, weakness, disease, etc., etc. by the machinations of cruel Time. Reflecting thus, one should learn that man's pride is but false. The world is subject to change; here there is nothing that is lasting. None knows what is in the lap of the future. Death may sunder him from all that he once had!

Owing to some good deeds of ours, we have wealth, a home, status etc., but the next moment, everything is lost, because a bad deed of ours

has begun to operate. So, when everything that man possesses, or thinks he possesses, is subject to destruction or has, after all, to get alienated from him, there is no justification for him to be proud of all these.

Visitor—Yes, this is no doubt true. Times change so inexplicably. Change is the law of the world, while one is climbing ladder of life, suddenly one's decline starts. Yes, man's boast is in vain.

Mè—Besides this, you should know that the present epoch—*Kaliyuga*—is nearing its end. In a few years, surely enough, man will lose all that he has. A time is coming near—the time about which it has been said.¹ "One man's wealth may lie buried under the earth, another's forfeited by the Government, a third man's stolen, and a fourth man's consumed in a conflagration." I hope, you see the signs of what is going to happen?

You should also be able to understand that today's king's glory and pomp are but dust as compared with the happiness all beings have in the Golden-Age and the Silver-Age. Health, eatables, mansions, wealth, happiness and everything of those times were *Sattwic*, exquisite, celestial, wholesome and lasting. What is now called 'prosperity and happiness' is comparatively worthless because these are unrighteously acquired, and are *Tamsic*, ephemeral and low-grade. Neither worry nor disease nor death-by-accident was there in the Golden Age. Youth and physical strength of today are as nothing. There was, in those times, unlimited wealth, even the domestic servants being richer and happier than the princes of today. That is why that world, on account of its high happiness, is called *Vaikuntha* or Paradise. Hence, it is no use being proud of wealth. The whole world in that Age was governed by deities.¹ Ownership of a few buildings or a few acres of land, as is common now-a-days, is but of little consequence. I am reminded of an instructive story.

Once a wealthy man of Bombay invited a *Sādhu* to dinner. After the dinner, the man took him round his house, pointing to his dining hall which was 'very big and where a large number of guests could be served', his kitchen 'where meals for at least a hundred at one time could conveniently be cooked, and where all facilities were provided', his 'three spacious bedrooms with Dunlop pillows', his 'big orchard', his 'factory whose chimneys belched out smoke', and so on.

The *Sadhu* recognised him to be swollen with pride, because, instead of listening to what would be conducive to his spiritual welfare, he

1. किसी की दबी रही धूल में, किसी की रजा खाए,
किसी की चोर लूट गए, किसी की आग जलाए।

2. Man, in the first two Ages of world, had divine qualities and is, therefore, known as a 'deity'

(the wealthy man) was boasting, wishing to prove that he was a very rich man. The *Sadhu* was silent for a while and then caught sight of a map of the world hanging on the wall and asked the *Seth Ji* where Bharat was shown on the map. The *Seth* pointed to the place and said, "The map of the whole world though drawn well, is on a small scale". Then the *Mahatma* asked him where Bombay was shown. He placed his finger at the point where Bombay was shown as only as a small point on the map. Seeing this, the *Mahatma* asked the *Seth* where his (the latter's) bungalow and factory were shown.

The *Seth* then understood what the *Mahatma* wanted to convey, and said: "I have now understood. You mean to bring home to me that Bombay is but a point in the world map, and my bungalow is but one of the countless ones in Bombay. I was foolishly boasting. I confess to my mistake. When the whole of Bombay is only a point, I am nobody. There are countless men who are as rich as, or even richer than I am. Puffed up with the possession of a little land and wealth, I thought too highly of myself."

The Visitor—I also have understood what you meant to convey to me. I believe that pride is a very bad thing. But, today, it has come home to me that whenever the feeling of pride arises in me, I should think that this world is subject to change and all the wealth one has, is short-lived, everything is non-permanent and that when the fruits of one's actions change from one kind to another, then his circumstances etc. also undergo change. Hence, it betrays ignorance to bank upon or boast of anything about the continuance of which one cannot be sure.

Secondly, because world-destruction is in sight, he, whom we consider our nearest and dearest one, is shortly going to be sundered from us.

Thirdly, we should know that, in comparison with the deity-sovereignty in the Golden Age, today's wealth, health, etc. are worthless, and though regarded as rich, we are, in truth, paupers and vicious, busy entreating God for happiness and deprived of the treasures of purity and reduced to the position of supplicants. All this boast we indulge in is empty, and even then we forget this. What is the remedy?

Me—Man should always remember that he does not know when life is going to end and that, therefore, he should be sweet and not haughty. Death is looming over man's head. With our last breath, we leave behind every thing we have? Why should we rely on that which we are bound to part with?

Another point to note is that man cannot become great by merely thinking himself to be great. He is great, when his greatness is admitted

by people in general. People admit only that man's greatness and love truly, who is humble and sweet. A haughty man over-awes others, who are then afraid of him, but they do not really take him to be great. Hence, man's greatness depends upon his humility and sweetness. In reality, he is great who does not wish to be praised by others. Nor he accepts praise from their lips, because by this acceptance, the force of self-abnegation is diminished, endeavour slackens and prospects of fruition become narrow. Therefore, you should abandon all desire for respect and a good name or for greatness. Praise should not make you vain. But it is all right if you are satisfied to learn that people are satisfied with your conduct and behaviour.

It is a truth that he, who thinks highly of himself or indulges in self-praise, is not considered to be great or exalted. This is natural. In the eyes of God too he is not great nor will he get a high position in the domain of the deities, because they are prideless and sweet; they are not prone to boasting or self-praise. But he who would be contented with a low position in heaven, i.e., in the Golden-Aged world or think of sitting in the *Darbār* of God, even if it be with his head hung low, let him have his joy of haughtiness.

Visitor—I am sure that when one has acquired true knowledge, one would not be haughty as otherwise one would suffer punishment in *Dharam Rājī*¹ court.

Me—Hence, one should be humble. There is a well-known saying that the haughty man is like a *Bāns*² tree which yields no fruits nor fragrance nor affords shade but stands bold upright. The humble man is like a tree, laden and bending with fruit, blessing all with its juicy fruit as well as cool shade and bringing happiness. You have acquired knowledge and now tree of knowledge should bear fruit in the form of humility. When shall in you, wise man, grow the fruits of the divine qualities of sweetness, tolerance, fortitude and love?

Visitor—Yes, the fruits shall soon appear. My efforts are aimed at that.

Me—That is also my conviction. I may tell you at this stage that when you live as a mere trustee under God then will pride be eradicated and the virtues of humility and sweetness be acquired.

"The meek shall inherit the earth."

Visitor—May I learn about the idea of being a trustee?

1. God as the Supreme Adjudicator and Expiator.

2. Bamboo.

Me -- Considering yourself a 'trustee' means that, from this very moment, you should firmly believe that God, not you are the possessor, that Shiva, the Supreme Soul, is the sole Master of all that there is, that you are but an instrument to employ all this for good purpose or in accordance with His directions. When you remember it all along that there is really nothing that is yours, and all this is of God, Who is incorporeal, there is no reason for you to be proud.

Visitor -- Yes, there is no reason.

Me - You know that some rich persons build a *Dharamshālā*, a hospital, a school or another institution with the money they have and hand it over to a Trust. Members of the Trusteeship Committee do not regard the institution as their own property but regard themselves as functionaries to manage it and are, therefore, never victims to pride because they know that the master and maker is someone else. Similarly, you should utilise the things you come to have, but should have the faith that you are but an instrument, that there is nothing that is yours, that all this comes from God, in accordance with whose directions and commands you have only to use them.

Visitor -- Now I understand. Thank you.

DETACHMENT IS THE PATH OF LIGHT

WHEN a person develops strong attachment towards a particular object, he is likely to become sorry when any thing goes wrong with the object to which he is initially bound. For instance, a mother feels sorry when her child is sick or leaves its moral coil. The reason is that the child's happiness is her happiness and her child's difficulty is her difficulty. Not only a mother, but every individual is attached to someone.

Why attachment ?

A man does not carry with him his money, his body or his near and dear ones when he gives up his mortal body but he takes with him only his good *karmas* or *punya* or virtues. These do go with him on his onward journey. But how to accumulate them? This involves a spiritual process of addition and subtraction. To make the point clear, any act performed while being soul-conscious and God-conscious will add to our virtues and any act performed under the guidance of body-consciousness or vices is likely to minus our virtues accumulated.

God-consciousness is the Way

This implies that our thoughts, words and actions should revolve around one point, i.e. God-consciousness. By doing so, one earns virtues or merits and destroys the so-called vices. Thus, the same thoughts which earlier wandered through the channels of vice now become divine through the remembrance of God.

Similarly, by words, one is likely to earn *Punya* (merit) when he brings an individual on the right path and makes the person soul-conscious and God-conscious. Man should speak only those words which are not going to harm anybody but bring them peace. Thus, by imparting Godly Knowledge to others he is helping himself because he has removed miseries from other's life. This divine act has its own repercussions on him in the sense that it has added to his virtues.

In the above paragraphs, we have seen that the accumulation of virtues and vices involves two-fold process of attachment and

detachment. One detaches oneself from the materialistic world only when one is convinced that there is something sublime and superior awaiting him in the other world. May be to one's surprise; but according to pre-ordained World Drama, our beloved *Pārlokik* God Father Shiva is awaiting us. He is eager to see how fast we cut down our bodily bindings and get detached from the body. But this will become easier if one follows the rule. "Develop detachment by having intellectual consciousness of God". If we thus become mentally detached, we will feel light and also find ourselves on the path of light.

THE EFFECT OF FOOD ON MIND

It is very difficult for one to follow fully the principles of pure diet. When a person sees other people eating all sorts of things, he feels, that observance of the principle of *Sāttwic* diet is more or less an unwelcome restraint.

But experience tells us that one's diet is closely connected with one's thoughts and conduct so much so that a wise man has said, "Tell me what a man eats and I will tell you what character he has". Hence, he who wishes to purify his thoughts and to elevate his character, should not take to diet which is not *Sāttwic* and pure.¹ The saying goes, "The mind is as the diet is," or, as is expressed in another ways: "Speech is of the same character as the water one takes."² So, he who wishes to rid his mind of vices and desires to keep his mind deeply in thought of God, must look to his diet. Thoughts become dark and impure when the diet is *Rājasic* or *Tāmsic*, i.e. not congenial spiritually. The mind becomes fickle when the diet is exciting, intoxicating, inebriating, and the character consequently declines, and sorrow and disquiet have to be endured, and these deprive the aspirant of the happiness there is in the spiritual communion.

An Example

When anyone takes wine or any other intoxicating thing, he becomes tipsy and loses his faculty of judgement. The faculty of reasoning and decision ceases to function properly. He becomes unwise and flies into a rage and is, as if it were, ready to pick a quarrel (or, becomes captious). Thus we mark how man's thoughts and conduct get degraded. Just as wine affects one's mind, words and actions, so does every other thing that we take produce its effect, which may be slight, strong or very deep. Keeping this in view, he who practises *Gyān yoga* should find out for himself which kind of diet is suitable for him.

Because drinking has a very bad effect on man's mind, Governments of several countries have framed Prohibition Laws and banned drinking wine or using other narcotics. This is, truth, not for man to use; it is forbidden.

1. जैसा अन्न वैसा मन। 2. जैसा पानी वैसी वाणी।

It is well-known that bibbing has a deleterious effect on man's mind and that the other intoxicants inflame our anger leaving us inebriated. Similarly, the use of meat, eggs and other allied viands arouse a ferment which gives birth to vices. The bibber loses not only his wits but also his senses and so also he, who takes impure food, cannot hold him continuously to the remembrance of what he really is, wherefrom he came to the world-stage, where he is to go and what he is to do here. In order, therefore, to be established in one's basic spiritual stage, and to be absorbed in the remembrance of the Supreme Soul, and also to protect his mind from vices, he should take only what is salutary. From the spiritual point of view, everyone is diseased. Hence man should be careful about that he eats.

The Analogy of a diseased person

How is it that we are diseased and what does abstinence mean?

Lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride etc. are in fact the great diseases which inflict pain on the soul. Man tries to be cured of these by means of Gyān (God's Knowledge) which works as medicine does, and by means of Yoga which is like an injection, so that he may consequently have complete peace and happiness. Just as a patient has to take prescribed diet and observe certain restrictions, so should he, who is afflicted with the disease, called vice, win his release from it by observing the rules of salutary diet as otherwise he cannot benefit fully by Godly knowledge or by instruction in Yoga. Now-a-days, as always before, a good many people, who receive God's Knowledge and practise a little yoga also but do not observe principle of *Sāttwic* diet, have been heard complaining that there has been no appreciable change in their lives. They feel neither mentally calm nor soothed nor resting in remembrance of God. It has been observed that one of the main causes of this state of the mind is that they do not give as much attention to the purity of their diet as they ought to. People in former times were very careful about what food they took.

Here, one may ask: "The food we take is a product of Matter while we say that mind is not an entity made of Matter but is the name given to the soul's faculty of thoughts, feelings and experiences. So, food which is a material substance can affect the body; but does it influence, for good or bad, the sentient soul also?"

Does the food influence the mind ?

The answer is 'yes'; it does influence. It has already been explained that the soul is a sentient point-of-light and that it resides in the forehead

and is connected with the brain. One knows that the brain is the control-room of the body with which it is connected by means of sensory and motor nerves. Hence, it should be clear that, through the medium of brain does the soul act, or have experience of pleasure and pain.

Therefore, whatever we eat or drink does have a special effect on the nerves and the brain, and thereby on the soul. By taking the example of wine, it has been explained already that drinking wine affects the brain and produces a state of excitement and 'fever', and so does every other thing that we take produce its effect. When one understands that the soul makes the limbs work through the agency of the brain and also has experience by means of the same brain, it will be clear that one's diet does have its effect on one's mind.

Unholy mind despite 'holy food'

In connection with the above explanation, one may like to put this question: "Don't we observe that some people who take meat and eggs are not so amenable to angry moods as some of those who are vegetarians? One finds that the outlook and habits of vegetarians are worse than those of some meat-eaters. How is this so? Does diet not have its effect on some men's mind? Or, are there exceptions to the rule stated above?"

This question reminds us of a story. There was a farmer who used to take his meal of flour, sprinkling salt and chillies-powder on it and without the aid of any dish of vegetables. A relative of his, from the city, had seen him eating his meal in this manner; he appreciated the farmer's physical build. He said how red his face was, and concluded that this was due to his use of red chillies. So, he copied the farmer, hoping his face will, in a few days, become red like the latter's. But, his health was instead affected adversely. At long last, he went up to a doctor, told him of his tale of misery, of how badly affected his eyes, rectum and the stomach had been thereby. The doctor laughed and said to him, "How strangely made you are! You connected his bright health with red chillies! He lives an outdoor life where there is fresh air, he keeps cheerful, tilling the earth gives him physical exercise and, to a certain extent, his forefathers, have a record of good health. Instead of thinking of these points you have taken the wrong path." So, anyone who says that some vegetarians are prone to great anger while some meat-eaters have less of this vice should understand that diet-chillies cannot be the only factor, as there are several other factors acting upon the mind. If, for instance, anyone is very lascivious, and wastes his energy, he is liable to be excessively angry. Another man gets into contact with backward or uncultured people and

picks up words of abuse and learns to be pugnacious. Another person has been afflicted with disease, and is consequently easily irritated. A fourth one has met diverse and adverse circumstances in life so that his frustration and helplessness are on the increase, and this makes him lose his temper. Someone's *Sanskāras* of the past lives are, in comparison with the *Sanskāras* of others, wild and fiery. So, there may be several different causes of an angry disposition, diet being but one of them.

There are many ways of eliminating the causes of sex-lust and anger, but if the diet continues to be harmful, there will be obstacles in the way of adopting those ways and the task of purification of one's conduct and *Sanskāras* will be attended with difficulties. Imagine a man who washes clothes clean often enough but lets these clothes receive whiffs of dust from somewhere near. So also think of a man who does his best to purify his mind but defiles it by taking food which is impure. All his efforts prove futile.

Some people say that one should not abstain from onions and garlic which, as they say, have many good qualities. Members of the family also say that without these two, *Dāl*, (Lentils, pulses) and vegetables are not tasty. Some people go so far as to say, "Now-a-days, there is no high nutrition in other things; a man who does not take eggs, though these are not dear, how can he build his strength"?

In this connection one ought to know that the ways of a person are determined by the state of his mind. When a man hears what other people tell him about diet, he should think of his loss or gain. Even ordinarily, man should not be a slave of one's body and its organs. Take the case of delicious food. It is not a fact that without onions or garlicks, no kind of food is good. My experience tells me that food becomes more likeable when none of these or similar foul-smelling ingredients are there. So, we have to note that we learn the art and science of good cooking and we have also to know that gradually one likes the diet to which one gets used.

There is yet another thing. It is wrong to think that there is nothing nutritious except these two—eggs and meat—or that man cannot acquire physical strength except from these. There are labourers who take their meal with ordinary vegetables and have the energy to work the whole day, to lift great burdens, to endure heat and other inconveniences and yet keep healthy. Hence, if a man, remained happy and unworried, did a little physical exercise and remained chaste, there is no reason for him to be weak. There may be the case of a person with a peccant humour from birth or any other illness keeping him always weak and all treatment in his case be useless.

Keeping all this in view, a man who wishes to improve spiritually, should take the kind of diet that helps him in achieving his object and abstain from the rest of the food as undesirable. Obviously, everyone does not aim at being tuned to God or at reaching the peak of spiritual greatness, and that is why one hears from many people the dictum, "Eat, drink and be merry", because it is their principle of life. But it goes against what a spiritual seeker's ideal is and against the efforts he is putting in. To man are available innumerable things to eat or drink, many of these being useful and nutritious. And he should in consonance with his ideals, take to foods which are salutary to his efforts—the food which is *Sāttwic*.

For this, we should know how to distinguish the *Sāttwic*, the *Rājasik* and the *Tāmasik* foods from one another, so that we may discard the last two, and take the first?

Tamasik Food

Those foods are considered to be *Tāmasik* that are intoxicating, heating, stale, pungent, heavy, decayed or not easy of digestion and induce sleep and lethargy. Meat, fish, eggs, garlic, onions, etc. are included under this head. Wine and smoking are also in this category. All these cause man's degradation. To a practisant of yoga, i.e. to him who wishes to concentrate his mind on God, these present huge obstacles.

Rajasik Food

Those foods are considered to be *Rājasik* that are there to tickle the palate, are taken when one is under the sway of his senses, are aphrodisiac in effect and render one's senses fickle.

Sattwic Food

Fruits, good vegetables and food cooked in the spiritually right manner are regarded as *Sāttwic* foods. And, as we want to become righteous and, as according to the methods of yoga, establishing our mind and *Buddhi* in remembrance of God and inculcating in ourselves divine virtues are given top priority, we should take only *Sāttwic* food so that obstructions in the form of intoxication, excitement, lethargy, sleep, lustfulness and attraction towards sensuality are not caused, the mind is not inflamed or deluded or the *Buddhi* does not become erratic or irresolute by being swayed by the mind and the senses. When the *Buddhi* is not pure, awake, balanced and righteous, it cannot draw might and bliss from the Supreme Soul and cannot distinguish properly between good and evil, true and false.

If one reflects a little, one will agree that the mind is liable to be influenced greatly in another way. Suppose a man eats meat. To eat meat, animate beings are slaughtered. Is this habit of man good? Surely, it is not. So, it is clear that, for the sake of one's food, the habit of getting birds and animals killed is simply murderous and selfish. Similarly, wine-bibbers acquire the habit of doing their business only in a state of excitement or under the impact of a beverage or when their mind is, as they say, adequately inspired. Those who love to eat onions, garlic or other foul-smelling things, which are liable to go bad, acquire thereby stink of bad attributes in them. To people desirous of the pure state of *Buddhi* (intellect), associated with good virtues and character, these are forbidden foods because if they take these, selfishness, passion, violence and easy acquirement of others' bad attributes are assembled together to form their *Samskāra* and mental outlook. That is why Shiva, the Supreme Soul, says to the aspirants: "Not only should the food, you take, be pure but the one who cooks it, earns it or serves it should also be righteous in temper, because not only does food affect the mind but the mind also, in its way, leaves its impress on the food one eats."

Now, though it is widely known that the food we take has its effect on our minds yet only very few know that the mind also affects food?

RENUNCIATION, GENEROSITY AND SERVICE

IN order to be a Yogi or an elevated soul, one has to have the spirit of Renunciation.¹ Renunciation has many forms. Just as every other divine virtue has its own characteristics, so has this virtue a quality of its own because this noble virtue raises the possessor of it very high. Because of this virtue it is that hermits are called '*mahātmās*'.² Just as a mountain has the highest position and a commander is the highest of all fighters so is renunciation the highest among the virtues. He who has the spirit of renunciation is the highest. Just as man feels that he is a pigmy in comparison with a mountain, so would anyone feel his own smallness in the presence of him who has this quality. That is why ordinary people bow to *mahātmās*.

True Renunciation

What is renunciation? First of all, we should be clear in our minds that a *Sannyāsi*'s³ renunciation of his hearth and home is not what we are concerned with, for that is simply in respect of gross, material things and is limited in scope, and is, therefore, not of the highest kind. He is the best of all who, while living in a household and having to deal with individuals and all sorts of things and events, remains free from the sense of attachment. Doing his duties, he is yet not caught in the net that attachment spreads for him. In him, there is the spirit of resignation and detachment. *Sannyāsis*⁴, on the other hand, give up just their worldly relationships and objects whereas they ought to abandon *fondness* for their relations and association and self-conceit in the performance of duties. Hence, their's is, as we said earlier, simply renunciation of the coarse kind, i.e. they keep away from their house and home but, being in contact with these, they do not abandon the *sense* of their relationship with these.

1. 'Renunciation', here, does not refer to giving up one's hearth and home and retreating to jungles, the word here refers to a tendency of mind.

2. Higher souls

3. Anchorite's.

4. Recluses; Hermits.

Secondly, though they may withdraw from their erstwhile earthly possessions, they do not detach their minds from *the whole world* around them. Their withdrawal is but limited and coarse and is, therefore, second-rate. The best and the most righteous kind is that when man, while living in the world, is untained by it like a lotus with its head lifted out of the surrounding mire.

Intellectual Renunciation

Perhaps, some people would feel that this kind of renunciation is difficult, but in fact it can as well be easy. The *Sānyasis'* action is based on disillusionment. They find pain and sorrow in this world and abandon it. In that case, they do not get to know well and completely the Supreme Soul and the other souls. But the kind we are mentioning here is based on the knowledge and understanding of God. That which is done with understanding does not present great difficulties. While the *Sannyāsi* repairs to a forest, performs *Hatha yoga* and observes long fasts, subjecting his body to several kinds of tortures, the renunciation of him who is bright and spotless like the *Rāj Hans* (King-Swan) or, in other words, who is *Raja yogi*, does not entail hardships because he relinquishes things, persons and places by means of his intellect. It consists in abandonment of attachment and worldly desires. From this point of view, it is not difficult but because it is purely intellectual and, hence, subtle, one has necessarily to work hard over it.

But it is necessary to know how has all this to be relinquished mentally now? Which are the things on the list?

Renunciation comes if one works as a trustee

The highest kind of renunciation may be achieved in any of the following eight ways. First comes the discarding of attachment, thirst or even desire for the objects of the sense-organs. Man cannot do anything without the help of these organs, but he must see to it that what he does is not vicious and that he does not get *involved* in the pleasures of the ear, the eye, palate, etc. Now-a-days, man is very much attracted by beauty, artificial decorations, dirty songs, etc. and is found of the pleasures of the palate, and remains thus under the control of his sense-organs. He is thus a *dependent* person and ceases to be happy. On the contrary, he should know that the body he has is held by him in trust and while he feeds and clothes it, he should not cultivate attachment to or desire for it. This is the first step to take. It includes shunning bad company because when he takes care not to do any unholy act, i.e., when he ceases to be thirsting for good food and clothes, the question of his being in bad company does

not arise. The fact is that giving up undesirable associations strengthens the idea of discarding wickedness.

Next comes the *mental* renunciation of bodily or worldly relations. While dealing with those to whom we are related one way or the other, and even associated with them, we should not let any feeling of attachment arise in us, nor be drawn towards the idea of those associations, or employ our *Buddhi* over them. This is renunciation by means of the intellect. Love there should be but not that kind which is *bounded* by very special individual relationship like those connected by such terms as denote physical relationships. It should be pure, selfless, unconditional and spiritual love. Of course, the knowledge that Mr. so and so is 'my uncle' or 'grand-father' may be there, but in our dealings with them there should not be such attachment as causes us to be unfair or less considerate to others; there should not be the sense of these relationships running so deep in our views that if anyone of them passes away or meets an accident, we feel agony or deep sorrow. That is, we should not be *trapped* in purely worldly and 'bodily' relationships, nor should our *mind* be inclined or drawn to or bend towards this sense.

Renunciation of reaction to praise and criticism

Thirdly, we come to conventional propriety. In the present unrighteous world, people consider him a dolt or a dupe and make fun of him who is on the right path. One man opines that he is under some spell or the other; another man holds that he has not his wits about him; a third person says that he is a misfit and there may be quite another person who comes out with the declaration that Yoga and Divine Knowledge and the like are useless. The hare-brained man asks him: "Has anyone seen or found God? You have got yourself involved in futile exercises; you have blind faith." Still another one goes further and indulges in a confutation of the code and methods of his Divine Knowledge and yoga in the presence of others and criticises him. The extreme case is that of him who takes to violence and creates obstacles in his path. But, he, who has truly renounced everything, has discarded any reaction that criticism, respect or disrespect, praise or dispraise would ordinarily arouse in man. There is no scope in his mind to retain their impressions, because what he remembers amidst all the noise going on around him is his own high ideal. Living in one's house amidst daily magazines and criticism and obstacles, he just casts them off so that they don't touch him. This is renunciation of high order.

Renunciation of Body-Consciousness

Fourthly, body consciousness has to be given up. *Sannyasis* leave

their hearth and home for good, and then they have nothing to do with members of the family to which they belonged. They are, as it were, out of his sight. But in this our body, the soul resides till death parts them, though it is the soul that sees, hears, speaks and does all other things, while still in this body, our soul has to be kept disjoined from it, and that is really a difficult form of renunciation. The *Samskāras* of body-consciousness have dug themselves deep in man through his several lives. Every day, a great many times, he has said to himself, "I am a man (or woman, as the case may be), I am young (or old, as the case may be), I am the son of so and so," and several other similar things, all these being based on the sense of his having a physical body. Detachment from this body, i.e., considering oneself a lonely soul, letting the body alone whenever one likes and not hankering after gratification of one's sense-organs (which means withdrawing them from all passion) and thus getting stabilised in the spiritual state—this is what is meant by *Rāja yoga Sannyās*.

Of course, when man dies, the soul leaves the body, but setting aside all consciousness of the body, i.e., becoming spiritually regenerated in the real sense—is a wonderful form of renunciation. It comprehends the abandonment, by means of the intellect, the whole of the vicious world, because he does actually renounce the physical world when he forgets the body and rests in the spiritual state. Truly speaking, giving up all attachment of the body that the soul has adopted as its tenement, leads us to the peak of renunciation. *Sanyāsis* no doubt throw off their garments, some among those being stark naked. The masses take this to be the highest kind of renunciation. But the truth is that the highest kind is to detach the soul from the body which is its garment and not to detach the woven articles that clothe the body. Adjuring the sense, or the awareness of life, position, tribe, etc., that present themselves before anyone's eyes when thinking of the body, and then be always established in soul-consciousness and looking at others as brother souls is the best imaginable kind of renunciation.

Renunciation of evil thoughts and resolves

Fifthly, we now go over to the consideration of impious thoughts and feelings. Relinquishing these, indicates a very high stage. You notice defects in others but do not let them occupy your mind; you learn about the faults committed by anyone or hear complaints against him, and yet do not allow it to impress you; you do not entertain old or crooked thoughts, you abandon the habits and outlook you had when you had not received divine knowledge and you do not engage in futile thought—this

is what would give you transcendental peace that is a characteristic of highly pure souls. Thus, you automatically renounce impious desires and latencies.

We have seen devotees, i.e., '*Bhaktas*' as they are commonly called, return from the temple to the world of unholy thoughts and objects, while *Sannyāsis*, according to their own code, keep from distracting objects and inhibit their desires. But those who have acquired God's Knowledge, are guided up by divine knowledge in their renunciation. Their renunciation is based on voluntary abnegation, not on repression, inhibition or curbing of mind. They renounce the desires surrounded though they be by seductive objects.

True Renunciation is total self-surrender to God

Sixthly, we come to worldly supports. Man has devised several different kinds of supports for himself. One man might think that his friend, who is a high officer in the Central Govt. Service, will come to his rescue if he is in a difficulty. Another man might say, "I have three sons, who are healthy and earn well and are, therefore, my staff in old age." Thus has everyone, in his own manner, his support to think of. He lives on the strength of this support and builds his hopes accordingly. But, he who has renounced everything, banks upon God and his spiritual strength. His mainstay is God, the Supreme Soul, and the divine knowledge, yoga and his divine qualities. He regards himself as having surrendered himself to God and, therefore, considers even his body to be not his own but only as given to him in trust. Even though he does his work in co-operation with others, he is linked with God in intellectual communion. His faith is unswervingly fixed on the Almighty. Though *Sannyāsis* give up all, they consider the clothes they wear to be their own, at least the loin cloth and the staff is inseparable from them. *Dervishes*¹ too carry their sticks as their own possession. But, those who adopt the eminently righteous kind of renunciation taught by Shiva, the Supreme Father, take complete surrender to be the true kind of *Tvāṅga*, behaving according to the faith that whatever they have received for use is God's, given in trust to them. Giving up mental association of one kind or another, they mentally live in the company of God, the Truth. "Give up the rest and take to One," is the same saying; "Find refuge in Me alone."² Those who act up to this dictum are the souls that have truly renounced and renounced without reservations.

¹ Muslim Saints

² *सर्वं त्यज्यते मे*

HOW TO ACQUIRE THE VIRTUES OF CALMNESS AND SWEETNESS

CALMNESS of mind and sweetness of temper are such qualities as give peace to man in all contingencies. Water taken by a man, who is scorched with heat, restores, coolness to him, or a very thirsty man is rejuvenated even with a handful of water. Similarly, calmness and sweetness of a man always transmit these qualities to anyone with whom he comes into contact. It serves him who is weighed down with grief and anxiety or has flared into a rage in the manner in which a fire-brigade or a locomotive tanker puts out a fire.

These serve like a tonic

Honey or butter has such attractive sweetness that anyone would taste it and be drawn to it with the desire to enjoy its nutritive quality. Similarly, people yearn to hear sweet words because these are highly pleasing and energising. So, Shiva, the World Father says, "Be as sweet as you can." Sweetness creates love and fosters unity which in turn brings peace and happiness. Where there is neither sweetness of language nor calmness or coolness of mind, strifes appear.

The storms raging in the mind are no less devastating than the fury of the elements, and the harsh words are no less painful and piercing than the pellets or stones. So, in order to live happily and let others live happily, one should know how to be calm and sweet.

How to develop these qualities?

For the purpose of developing these and such other divine qualities, we have to remember that we belong to God's family and as He is the Ocean of love. Our dealings with one another should be invested with love like that which binds noble brothers of one and the same family. Unless and until we have the feelings of universal brotherhood and love in our mind, we cannot have sweetness or lasting calmness. No doubt, the slogan that the "Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, all are brothers" is there but, in order to live this truth, we have to realise that we are souls and we have to know who is this Soul-Father of ours whose bidding we have to follow in order to be united. For want of this knowledge, there are

disputes and people draw daggers at one another. The Knowledge that there is one Father, forges links of brotherhood and sets up one universal code. We should know also that this sense of brotherhood is born of soul-consciousness. Because, now-a-days, people do not recognise souls or do not live as souls, and do not know God, the World-Father, who is the Ocean of love and the Giver of one universal truth and excellent advice and righteous reason, it is not possible to be linked with one another as brothers, not to speak of unity and love coming in.

Now we should acquire the knowledge of that Father and, having learnt all this, we should live amongst ourselves like sugar and pudding and deal sweetly and calmly with all, so that, even if we do not utter any word, our actions speak for us in such a way as to tell others that we come of God's family, that we have become righteous and that our speech is as sweet and soothing as fruits in the 'Garden of Eden' are. We should be so sweet that people may easily conclude that the seed of the tree whose fruit (product) we are is God Himself.

Our words causing pain to others will bring pain to us

But, on the contrary, we find that people, now-a-days, talk as if they are flinging stones at one another. That explains the fact that they rid one another with gunshots as it were and cause pain. So, God, the Supreme Father says, "Stop all this give and take of pain, because he dies in pain who causes pain to others"¹. Accordingly, we should see to it that harshness does not continue any longer. We should fill ourselves with sweetness to the core. God Shiva, the Supreme Father, addresses us as: 'Sweet children, lovely children'². So we should not be disobedient; we should not be bad children, our speech should be as sweet as nectar; it should not be poisonous.

Sweet as a nightingale

We should remember that speech indicates what is in one's mind. As the man, so the words he utters. Mental calmness renders man's speech calm. It is said that one's speech may exalt him to Kingship or send him to the gallows.³ So, God directs us to be sweet tongued like the *Koel*, the nightingale. Never let yourself be misled by *Māyā* to indulge in bitter speech

1. 'हम सब को एक-दूसरे से दुःख देने का काम बन्द करो'।

2. 'सुखी बच्चों, प्यारी बच्चों'।

3. 'होशियार का बोल ही राजपुत्री है, होशियार का बोल ही'।

Mark, how sweet God is! He attracts all souls as if by a magnet. How deeply and truly devotees love him! His sweet and soothing words which form The Gita are recited and repeated every day by people because there is sweetness in them.

Calmness and Sweetness can do away with many social evils

Unrighteousness is rampant today because neither sweetness nor love nor calm dispositions exist. Where these exist, there are love and fellow-feeling and brotherhood which make short work of corruption, bribery, adulteration, black-marketing, *pugree*, etc. There cannot then be what is called destruction of goods by setting fire to them or by pelting stones at them. People start an agitation, fling stones at others, set fire to things and places and cause disruption all round. Businessmen ask for *pugree* and they adulterate goods. Government officials ask for bribe. All this happens because they do not recognise that we are all members of God's family and are, therefore, brothers. The main reason is that they are not soul-conscious nor they remember Him, who is the Father of all souls. In short, soul-consciousness and remembrance of God make realise the idea of one brotherhood, which brings about harmonious behaviour and calmness of mind.

Render Service to others by being sweet

People groaning under a hot sun get pleasure only when they rest in the cool shade of a tree. Clearly, therefore, one who is at heart very cool and has a face shining with joy, disseminates both joy and coolness. So, as at present, man is being assailed by *Māyā* in various ways and is sad, our behaviour with him will mean imparting joy to him and getting something ourselves. If anyone gave all his wealth and property to the members of his family, they would still not be pleased with him if he does not behave well with them.

If a doctor prescribes the right medicine but speaks harshly to the patient, the latter takes the treatment but at least does not derive full benefit from it. Similarly, a social worker, however energetic and sincere he be, will be shunned by people if his treatment is not sweet or balanced. So also a spiritual worker or a *Gyāni* needs these two qualities, as otherwise no one would listen to an indifferent and harsh-tongued worker.

That is why Shiva, the World Father, repeats the instruction as follows :

God's Message

"Sweet children, I am carrying you across this river of sorrows of the world to the ocean of peace and happiness which are the marks of the Satyugi World where universal love reigns. Hold these virtues of sweetness and coolness as one would hold a paddle in a boat." In the righteous world, no one looks at others inimically or askance or with contempt. Their looks radiate joy. They hold one another nearest their hearts. These two virtues are to be found there in such great abundance that it is rightly called *Sachcha Khand* (The True World), *Swarga* (Heaven), *Kshir Sāgar* (the ocean of Milk), or in other words, the Abode of Happiness.¹ The heart fills with joy to hear even these names.

People go to temples and see signs of coolness, sweetness and cheer in idols made of clay and experience, by transference, feelings of coolness and peace though these idols cannot speak. How much more of sweetness and love there must have been in deities when they were in flesh and blood! About the times in which deities lived, the saying is well-known that a lion and a goat drank from the same stream.

Dear children, "Now that I have come again to set up the same kind of world, you should become so sweet and loving in actual life that, in your dealings with one another, there should not be a trace of bitterness, ill will, hatred or passion. In the present wicked world, people bite one another as scorpions do, belch forth poison, which simply turns of the face pale or blue and robs others of life and lays them low in collapse. Give up these Satanic habits and, by making others happy, be, in the real sense, children who are the one to impart happiness to all."

Sweetness and calmness are harbingers of happiness

Taking this soothing message to heart, we should learn to be quiet and pleasing. We shall thereby find joy in life. This joy will appear in our face in the form of cheerfulness. If we do not behave well with others, they will not derive joy from or through us but only sorrow, with the result that we shall ourselves have thus lost hold of the virtue of cheerfulness. Can one who causes pain to others ever have joy as his share? It is a matter of common observation that, on persons of this sort, the harm done by them to others, rebounds like an echo in a domed room where one's own voice comes back to the speaker. So, we should remember that there is joy in the heart only when man makes others happy, helps or does any other good deed. From a happy person's mouth spring soothing words.

Make a sacrifice of your roughness

The future of this vicious world is obscured as if in an eclipse, by grief, pain and gloom. So, man should sacrifice unto God the five vices. They say that giving away in charity relieves one of the sorrow.¹ By giving away the vices (which are born of the body-consciousness), the mind is vastly relieved, the face looks better and when joy is in the heart, the habits learn to be clam and sweet.

It is a point to remember that by imparting knowledge to others, making them learn virtues by your own example and by offering them your spiritual force to help them, you uplift their souls and yourself earn joy as a reward of performing, as it were, innumerable yagyās, all because you are either doing service to them or are instrumental in their achievement of joy and bliss. He who gives freely of *Gyān*, *Yoga* or of Divine Virtues to others as a gift, is really doing what God does and is having some virtues that God has. He becomes a philanthropist, a noble soul. He obtains joy and bliss. It is he who does really obtain the blessings of God.

There is yet another point. Man's joy is aroused to see the treasure that he possesses—these treasures may be of wealth, of his good actions or qualities. Acting on this principle of commonsense, the wise man should bring before his mind's eyes all gains of Godly Knowledge and virtues that adorn God and the infinite treasure that yoga is. Not only this, he also should contemplate on these and turn over these again and again. Thus will your happiness grow more and more. Joy derived from this glorious phenomenon will bring sweetness, quiet and several other virtues and will automatically make you think of doing good to others by imparting *Gyān*² to them. He who does not make gifts of *Gyān*, *Yoga* and his virtues to people and does not hand over the vices to God for disposal, can never be always of good cheer.

1. दे दान तो हृदये प्रसन्न

DETACHMENT AND FREEDOM FROM BONDAGES

JUST as pride is born of egoism, so is delusion the result of attachment. In him whose viewpoint is determined by bodily forms and shapes, attachment towards his children is born. First of all, man considers himself a body, and those born to him to be his children. By living with them, if he is not soul-conscious¹, attachment and fondness are consequently strengthened and ripen. It is the physical attachment, not spiritual love, that disturbs communion and stands in the way of his receiving spiritual happiness and high bliss.

There is attachment towards worldly relations as also towards material things one uses in one's daily life. There are instances of souls of dead persons having turned into ghosts or spirits because of the vice called attachment and then wandering about the house in which they lived when in bodily form. This vice of attachment pesters man even when he is at grips with death, and, consequently, drags him back, with its traces - *things* - to this world of birth and death. And when he comes into this world, his sense of attachment begins to operate, with the result that he has again to get caught in the noose of death and stand the trial and pains of birth. Viewed from this point, all sufferings of beings which are subject to birth and death, have their main origin in attachment, which, in appearance, is of little consequences but, in truth, the most alluring in its ways. That is why the main object of the knowledge that the Gita gives is to enable us to eradicate this vice and to acquire the true idea of ourselves. As long as man's attachment remains, he cannot be fully stable in Yoga, which is the stability in the remembrance of God, and so long as Yoga is not complete, he cannot have Beatitude.

Why is Attachment Considered a Vice?

Attachment is indisputably so bad that it ranks high among the vices. The term '*Vikar*' means 'topsy-turvy of perverted form' or

1. There is a lot of difference between love and attachment. Love does not give place to hate or pain under any circumstances.

2. The six well-known worldly desires - lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride and indolence are known as *Sat* (from *Sattva* - good). The word '*Vikar*' means perverted form of something.

anything that brings about a change for the worse. The pure form is that of love, i.e. spiritual love; its perverted form is attachment, i.e. excessive devotion to or fastening on things around us. Even though it is subtle and cannot be seen with the naked eye, its chains are stronger than iron-bars or the ropes that are used to tie down elephants. Tied down by this vice, man suffers at all times. Firstly, the thing that attracts a man towards itself is got only after the man has undergone hardships. Next, the man has to fight to keep the thing safe, and, if by any chance, the thing he loves so well is in any way impaired, he becomes miserable. Further, if any relative or friend, of whom the man is fond, is taken ill or becomes victim of any accident or is involved in trouble, he feels as if he himself is torn with misery. And, if the death of that relative or friend occurs, then the grief of the man is very very deep. Not only he is himself miserable but also those who are interested in him or are involved with him by the chain of attachment. They also feel sad when they see him sad. These latter too are made to weep while he himself suffers rebirth after pain and thus he renders the others liable to punishment for this vice. In short, this vice is very very malevolent.

Anyone afflicted with this vice is always subservient to others. He will never get rest till he has seen or obtained the company of the object or the person with whom he has attachment. Ever solicitor about that thing or person, his happiness he cannot own. Therefore, God Shiva says: "My child, if you look for transcendental peace of mind, relinquish this vice".

Can one run one's household without attachment?

Earning one's bread, eating it, feeding the young ones, setting up a home and doing other similar things—these duties are done by birds and beasts also. The sparrow carries a grain or two in its beak and puts it in the young bird's mouth. Even the birds build their dwellings with skill. How is then man different from them? Man should discharge his duties in a noble manner and splendid gain should accrue to him thereby.

Parents nurse their children and bring them up in all possible ways. They believe that the child will be happy. But it may happen that the child catches a disease and is unhappy, or is disabled by an accident or dies. In all these situations, the parents become helpless and say: "What could we do? The child's *Karmas* were such that our dealings with him have come to such an end." And then they pray to God to end his

If the child is habitually harsh, obstinate, quarrelsome or ill-mannered, its parents pray that God may grant him wisdom. So, the fact that people pray to God when there is disease, grief or decline shows that they are helpless. Can we then consider this to be discharge of man's responsibilities? Don't we see that there is something lacking in the parents' conduct and there is a fundamental defect in the way they do their duties and, consequently, there is either disease, or grief or frustration or disaster or even death among children in spite of the discharge by them of their duties? The despair of parents to see their children unhappy and their inability to save them from death at a young age-- this means that the former are not able to fulfil their obligations.

Better without Attachment

In Satyuga, i.e. in the Golden Age, neither premature death nor fatal accident, nor disease nor grief is to be found. This is so because, in those days, there was in parents the power that purity has. In short, they were righteous. Love existed, but not attachment which had been conquered by them. They did their duties: they loved wisely but not too much and, hence, the age was one of happiness. That was the true form of doing one's duties. Sorrow was not in existence then because the souls of those who lived in Satyuga had, during Sangam Yuga, rendered their *sanskāras* righteous by instilling the power of purity in their actions. Even though in Satyuga and Tretāyuga, people, who were deities, lived in families, their life was so pure and their household so noble that even till today the inhabitants of Bharat worship them.

The question naturally arises how they infused power in their actions and rendered their *sanskāras* righteous and also how they conquered the vice of attachment?

It was by practising spiritual communion with the Almighty who is the Supreme Soul, during their previous birth that they rooted this vice out and became righteous. Their actions were so mighty that death could not snatch their children from them. Neither disease nor natural calamities could ever cause affliction to anybody. Whatever they did in Sangam era¹, they did it with the remembrance of Shiva, the Supreme Father. They were thus true *Karmayogis* and, as a result of this, the associations or links they had in the next birth which was in Satyuga, were of those who too had been liberated from the ties of the vicious world and who were *Muktatmas*. But, now-a-days, every mother's son is crushed in *Karma*, the consequences of which cause

1. The period just preceding Satyuga, it is the conjunction of the Iron Age and the Golden Age.

him sorrow. Being helpless, they simply look on; whereas in the Golden Age, all activity was subservient to the deities, which, in other words, means that nothing that they did ever brought pain.

All would admit that we are at present slaves to actions. We get what we do not want. We try our best to be happy but true happiness is a dream. Very often we feel the bonds of actions. But the question is: "How can we have that liberation which deities enjoy? How will our actions gain efficiency? Why shouldn't one manage to abandon all the vicious activity?"

It is impossible to relinquish completely all activity but one can give up vicious activity. Doing action is our duty. It is done also to earn one's living. So, the God of Gita says that we have not to renounce action but to act as a trustee and to become *Karmayogis*. This means that our actions should be taintless, that we should remember God, the Supreme Father, while doing our actions and that we should regard ourselves as trustees engaged to deal with all that we have by offering it to Him. Working in this spirit will never involve us. All attachment will vanish and actions will reach excellence.

This method, explained by God, is simply excellent, but our tendencies being deeply rooted, sometimes attachment crops up again. But, there is nothing to worry. However obstinate these tendencies be, we are drawing from the Almighty God the strength that is needed to wipe them out of existence. If we do not drive them away now, it will be too late, for isn't the Almighty Shiva teaching us how easily to get this strength from Him? Are we going to get another opportunity when the present one has already passed? No. So, we must purge ourselves of all this dirt now.

One can say : "I am ready to give up attachment. But will God relieve me of this?"

Will God Help Us?

This reminds us of a parrot who was perched on the branch of a tree and chattered as a parrot does, asking to be set free from the branch and to be set on the wing. A passer-by heard this and laughed, saying to it, "O you parrot, don't you see that you have yourself caught hold of the branch with your claws? You have wings. You can fly by your own efforts. Why should another person set you free or make you fly?" This illustrates the state man is in. God has granted every soul the wings of *Gyān* and *Yoga*, but none can release a person except himself who has, at this time, clung fast to the memory of worldly things and

relationships. One has himself to make efforts to obtain Release. All that God does is to show us the way and to grant us peace of mind. God helps those who help themselves.

So, Shiva, the Soul Father, says to His children, "It is for your sake that I have come from My Transcendental abode to reform this present vicious world. Why are you lagging behind in the matter of reforming your household? You are in reality devoid of any strength, and yet you say that you are managing your home and discharging your duties! At the same time, you say that the household cannot be run without allowing the feelings of attachment and other vices to play their due part! Truly speaking, these have perverted your point of view. I do not ask you to abandon your hearth and home. I, on the other hand, advise you to derive strength from Me, the Almighty, by means of Yoga as, otherwise, you cannot purify your *sanskāras*." God also says, "Vices have poisoned the fount of your life, and even then you run after what is poisonous!"

Really Bad

One should ask the self: "How at all is it right to hold fast and cleave to this framework of flesh and bone? Man must remember it very well that he who is charmed by this material sheath of the body, has to deal in skins in his next life. This house of clay and iron when loved too much, makes one a potter or a smith. He who clutches money, becomes a beggar, while he who is bound hand and foot to his relations, becomes a prisoner in the next life by the simple rule that what one thinks of in the last moments of one's life, determines the course of one's next existence. Hence, in any case, man should try to be released from attachment.

And so, Shiva, the Supreme Soul, says to all His children, "You should not get fond of anything that belongs to this Iron-aged, ill-fated, old world which is nearing its end. Do not at all think that there is still time for destruction to come, because the thread of life is too thin to hold up even though, at the present moment, you might say that for only a few years more mankind has still to go. Death may overtake anyone before finale of the world comes. If, for instance, anyone dies at the very moment, what would his state be as a result of the fondness he has established for the things of this world? Sure enough, the soul shall have to undergo punishment in the regions of *Dharmarāja*¹—the Great Adjudicator. Hence, one should not lend oneself to the viles of

¹ Old habit or tendencies or intentions.

² That is the Supreme Adjudicator.

the world lest one be luckless for the whole of the *Kalpa*¹. You are aware that, even otherwise, everything of this world has lost its pith and shall soon cease to be. And, if one now willingly, earnestly and energetically discards excessive fondness and attachment, one will acquire complete, unhindered and very happy deity-sovereignty in the coming righteous world. So, man should do his duties like a true, soul-conscious *Karmayogi* in Godly remembrance, like a trustee in obedience to God's command.

Let us mark the behaviour of a nurse. She looks very well after many an infant. Though she keeps them clean, feeds them well and does every other thing for them, she does not get entangled in attachments. Therefore, it is not correct to believe that, without attachment, one cannot run a household. We know that a boat, when afloat, carries passengers across but if water enters the boat, it sinks carrying with it also the passengers to the bottom. Exactly in the same manner, if attachment enters the mind of man, he is drowned in the river of life, whereas this same man will cross this river if this vice did not find its way in his mind.

What God Father Shiva says about attachment is very important, for if man, as He says, remembered that death might come at any time and that, in case attachment arose in him in his last moments, he would not get fruition, he should purge himself of this vice and be prepared to die at any moment.

¹ World Cyle, consisting of five epochs.

language or defamatory remarks still directed towards the end of injuring or humiliating the person who is the object of our anger. Such unfortunate situation arises from our failure to realise the realities of life.

Causes

The main cause of anger is greed, attachment, hunger for respect, desire for self-importance and inferiority complex. For instance, a mother is so much attached to the child that a small criticism by others will arouse an unnecessary irritation in her mind which will blot her soul. At the spur of the moment, she may not realise the harm which she may cause to herself. Then there is the urge to assert oneself and raise oneself. This nature to prove ourselves that we are somebody, makes us unhappy. This craving for grandiosity, this superiority complex is the cause of mental disorders.

Next, there is the tendency to try to get the better of his rivals by foul means if not by fair means. It is a matter of common experience that when man makes a new acquaintance, he sometimes tries to find out in what respects the latter is inferior to him. Thus, the dominating urge to power and self-assertion, born of a feeling of personal inferiority, is sometimes the motive force of man's striving. The more the inferiority, the keener the urge—a circumstance which reveals inferiority of a person possessed of a towering ambition. It is said that the greatness of Napoleon was due to his excessive inferiority and the humiliations which he suffered at the hands of his class-fellows. Similarly, the success of Demosthenes, who became the greatest orator of Greece was probably disturbed by his natural inability to speak clearly.

Remedies

The eruption of anger can be defused only by settlement and self-realisation and not by fire power. Mental health consists in the peaceful working of our tendencies in harmony with society. True compensation for our inferiority lies not in indulgence into imaginative phantasies of power and self-importance but in realisation of this self. The main cause is self-forgetfulness in relation to the soul-Father and this has led to degeneration into this unrighteous world. Our connection having been broken with God, the Ocean of Peace, we have become peaceless. Instead of considering the whole humanity as a big family, based on soul-consciousness, we find ourselves in a limited world, based on body relationship. Now, to set the things right, we, souls, can derive power

from the Highest authority, the God Almighty, like the magnetic force which never made a coil of wire and produces electricity. The realisation of our nature brings to us the feelings of unity towards the entire humanity. The knowledge of one's self and the knowledge of the Creator lift the mind out of all commitment and becomes a source of great inspiration. We reach a stage where we consider each soul as our brother in the perspective of God and thus develop, with God, the new link as of Father and son. God thoughts translated into action change the atmosphere and the surrounding environment. In the same way, correct discipline of mind, based on the realisation that all human beings are souls, will tie humanity into a bond of natural love and affection and thus we shall gain victory over anger.

Consider all grave situations as a passing phase

Any contingency should be considered as a passing phase of this eternal world picture, where each scene has its own important substance. Just as sound waves travel outwardly from a vibrating object, each one inside the one moving ahead of it, in the same way, continuous remembrance of the true Father, God Almighty, can set noble vibration in the atmosphere and thus alter our stage from the gross scene to the one where we experience supreme benediction.

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Distinguish between your friend and foe

Anger is the enemy of the soul and divine virtue is its friend. Sometimes, it happens that a person may feel irritated without much cause. Even then one should apply the virtue of silence. Man alone has the tremendous privilege to choose between good and evil. So, he deserves a reward for doing good and punishment for doing evil. Keeping this in mind, one should not give up the virtue of silence after a man feels angry with us. Continuous remembrance that we are souls—originally peaceful—eventually helps to overcome the emotion of anger, for we no longer feel that we are bodies of flesh and blood. Our soul is a traveller in this world and the body is its receptacle. The soul comes from the 'Soul World' to play its role on the world-theatre. The movement of the child in the womb of its mother is felt when the soul enters the body. No sooner does this human frame step on the world theatre than it comes into contact with his parents, friends and relatives. The original stage of the soul is a replica of purity, peace and bliss. It is strange irony of fate that we get so much entangled in various groups and sections that the final road to success is lost. With the correct discipline of mind, we can eliminate anger if we pass each

emotion through the scale of reasoning and judgement and reach a universal truth that we are all sons of the Supreme Soul, God Almighty.

The knowledge that the self or soul is the controller of this body is an another way to control our emotion of anger. Our soul, with its five characteristics—mind, intellect, resolves, light and might is like a pilot who sits in cockpit, works, controls and guides the plane from the time it takes off til the time it lands safely on the runway. This will save us from the root cause of anger—‘arrogance.’

Our mind is like a mirror, it gathers dust of anger while it reflects. It needs the gentle breeze of spiritual wisdom to wash away the dust of our illusion. Our temper is a valuable possession; we must not lose it. A slip of the foot we may recover, but a slip of the tongue we shall not recover, for it will cover our soul with prints and impressions which will be hard to scratch. So, constant vigilance on the tongue and the acquisition of divine virtues like inwardliness, surrender-to-God, tolerance, cheerfulness and self-reliance will be of great help to us. We are spiritual social workers. Loveful and purposeful, remembrance of God Almighty, the Fountain of spiritual light and might, can bring forward a powerful stage where nothing will irritate us. Blessed is he who has learned to admire but not to envy. One who follows this principle of appreciating others will also be free from anger.

Other Remedies

Let us consider the question of ideological differences which is one of the causes of anger. Man ought to keep in view the fact that, in the present-day vicious world, ideologies have increased tremendously in number, as if everything here is conditioned by the Law of Variety. No two persons are alike even as two leaves of one and the same tree are not completely like each other. It is impossible to see two persons with exactly the same features or doing the same kind of actions. A tree has numerous leaves and branches but the seed is one, and the stem is also one. Hence, this world, which is compared to a tree, representing the march of centuries with their respective traits, has the Supreme Soul as its seed, and that is only one seed. When the tree was in its first stage of growth, i.e. when the world had started its course, it had, in its first stage, only one ideology, one religion and, consequently, one sovereignty. To be able, therefore, to lower the heat of anger or to bring in unity and peace, man should always be remembering God, the Seed of this world Tree, and should regard this variety of sins as peculiar to *Kaliyuga* and as symptomatic of the coming Destruction. With this in mind, one should be cheerful because happy days, i.e., the beautiful

days of *Satyuga* are fast approaching. Hence, he should not be impatient. Nor should he be petulant or crascible as he would then not come into the New World, but when he is born again, he will have to be in the unenviable company of the ill-tempered.

Feelings of brotherhood

One should also understand that in *Satyuga* the lion and the cow drink together from the same stream. Should we not then, by virtue of being His children and, therefore, brothers to one another, work unitedly? In *Satyuga*, this world was like an ocean of milk and people were virtuous. Does it behove us to be bitter towards one another instead of being sweet like milk? Aren't we descended from the deities?

Each and every part of a deity's body is mentioned by the word lotus, prefixed to it, e.g., lotuseyes, and lotuslike mouth.¹ Is it, in any sense, proper for us to be vile as a thorn instead of being soft and bright like the lotus? Anger is, undoubtedly, the wicked man's mark. How can we become deities if we are subject to anger? How then can we obtain heavenly sovereignty? By reflecting in this manner, the light of knowledge is kindled and out goes all feeling of anger.

Take all situations in the light of the Law of Action

Several times it happens that improper behaviour of an individual arouses anger in man but he should regard this as due to his own *Karmas* and take it—and it is correct to think, in this manner—that no one would ever speak vilely to him if he had not committed any evil action sometime before, in this or in anyone of his previous lives. Reflection on these lines should induce calmness, which will have a salutary effect upon that individual. Otherwise, the fire of anger cannot be put out.

Proper Attitude towards other's shortcomings

One of the causes of anger is that man does not tolerate the shortcomings or mistakes of others. But the right thing to do in this case is not to be annoyed at their defects or weaknesses but to mark his own tendencies which lead to anger, and then watch how his own shortcomings can be overcome. If anyone commits a mistake or fails to understand a point and, therefore, does not accept it, or opposes it, we

1. कमल नेत्र कमल मुख

should bring about a change in his view only by means of sympathetic understanding and by the desire to do good to him, and by tactfully making him understand our point of view. This way, we shall be increasing our own spiritual strength and peace simultaneously with the laudable work of putting him on the right path. If man is himself unable to wipe out his own tendency to anger, how can he chide anybody for his inability to control himself? Godly Knowledge enjoins upon us not to be angry with him who is in the wrong but to help him out. Lift him out of the error, which is deep as a well and into which he has fallen. Otherwise, we too will meet him in the depths of that well. When we do not like others to lose temper, it is necessary that we dispel anger from our own minds or, otherwise, we shall be considered guilty like the one whose behaviour we do so strongly disapprove.

Use of polite word

One way of eradicating anger is to learn to use at least a few forms of affectionate and polite speech. In conversation, the use of the words, such as 'friend,' 'sweet brother,' 'loving mother,' 'respected sister,' etc, should be cultivated. Particularly, while talking to a person of opposite views, we must employ these or similar words in the right spirit. For ourselves, we shall be balanced and the other person, if he is habitually passionate, will become calm.

Original Nature

There is yet another point to mark. We must understand that the essential virtue of the soul is purity and peace. People in general, nowadays, accept rites and rituals as their *Dharma*, while the high principles and noble conduct of life remain restricted to books. But now, when they are beset with sorrow of one kind or another, because they have given over the basic spiritual values of peace and holiness, it is necessary for them to learn, by constant practice, how to remember that we are souls—the children of God—that our original nature is holy and peaceful, that anger is neither our essential nature nor our form. Is it not true that he whose anger causes pain to others, himself suffers pain? Similarly, does not a calm mind give peace to others? Hence, we should resolve to do only that which promotes peace. Success springs from calmness of mind. Rightly has it been said: "Where there is *Dharma* victory is always secure." *It is cold iron that cuts and bends hot iron.* So, it promises success to deal calmly with an excited man.

Hence, recognise Peace to be your religion, and be good so that talk begins or ends with the sweet utterance of 'Om Shanti'¹

Mild anger is not outside the pale of bad actions

The Government of various countries has fixed penalty only for virulent forms of anger, i.e., only he who under the stress of the emotion of anger, kills or employs a weapon to kill another person, is held guilty, because if the Government, one day, instituted a law to hold these also guilty whose anger is but mild, i.e., not serious, there will be none left to administer the said law as the law-makers, judges, ministers and other high officers, in fact all persons would, at one time or another, be held guilty of anger in one degree or another. But we should not make the mistake of regarding the action due to mild anger as outside the pale of bad actions simply because the Govt. has not made such cases as punishable by law or that whatever is yet not punishable will pass muster over there in the final reckoning. We should note that, according to the laws of the Highest Authority, i.e. God, the Supreme Father, even slight anger will render the angry man liable to punishment. In fact, even at the moment when he is in bad temper, he receives punishment in the form of peacelessness. So anger, whether mild or severe, is always harmful, and, therefore, man should learn to be calm. sweet and peaceful.

1. It means: 'Peace is our original nature' or 'Peace be on you.'

HOW TO CONQUER SEX-LUST?

Sex-lust is the worst enemy of a yogi. It is this vice that degrades man, drawing him, as a powerful enemy would, from the heights of spirituality down to abysmal depth of body-consciousness. It robs him of the treasures of divine bliss and spiritual happiness, and thus deprives him of deity-sovereignty. It is a patent truth, never to be forgotten, that he who is on the way to getting near God, becomes deeply debased if he indulges in sexual gratification. He would need huge effort and a very long time to come back to his former state of yoga, i.e. spiritual union with God. That is why it is necessary to purify our outlook and habits before we think of anything else. He who practises spiritual communion, should acquire the poise that knowledge and faith give so that his eyes don't deceive him and the colour and lineaments¹ of anyone's body do not attract him. If one's eyes are prone to be criminal, we should understand that, in him the foundations of divine knowledge and Brahmacharya still need being strengthened.

Wrong method adopted by Sur Dass

It is said that, in order to purify himself, Sur Dass, the famous devotee and poet, passed needle through his eyes so that these do not see nor deceive. But, in reality, the eyes are not to blame. It is Body-consciousness that leads to fault, and, so, we have to eliminate it with the needle of Divine Knowledge. In this process, there is no trouble involved.

The correct way

For instance, when husband and wife, in the course of their prayers before a picture of God, say: "Thou art our Father and Mother² or "Thou art our father, mother, helper, master, friend and our sole protector³," the wife also says, "O Lord, thou art our Father," and he

1. रंग-रूप

2. त्वमेव मातास्व पिता त्वमेव

3. पितृ मातृ सहायक स्वामी सखा
तुम ही एक नाथ हमारे हो

chimes in with her. This shows that, from the stand-point of spiritual relationship, the Supreme Soul is the *Mother-Father of both of them* (although, according to the bodily relationship, if God be the man's father, He should be the woman's *father-in-law!*) Thus, no lustful thought enters their minds as long as they are in mind of their spiritual kinship. In a Gurdwara too, people say: "Thou art our Father and Mother, we are Thine children; by Thy grace, we gain great happiness."

All this makes the truth plain that, so long as man and woman regard themselves as souls and as *God's children, and brothers* among themselves, no thought of criminal assault arises in them. And that shows why unholy feelings do not arise when we are in a Temple, a Church or a Gurdwara. Therefore, it is as plain as a pikestaff that, as long as man does not look upon others in the household from the angle of the soul and does not deal with them on the lines of soul-consciousness, his outlook and habits will not only be not civil but will become positively criminal. So, we have to be soul-conscious and have to keep the eye of knowledge open if we want to get rid of this enemy.

It is said that Shiva opened His Third eye and burnt sex-lust away. This is truly something to draw a lesson from. We, souls, are of the family of Shiva. If our third i.e. the divine) eye is open, sex-lust will certainly die. But if we shut this very eye of ours, surely what we see will deceive us. Our outlook in that case will get tainted with sex-lust. In other words, it means that if we become body-conscious then only will our mind get polluted with thoughts of the vices. Otherwise, it will remain pure.

How to create good atmosphere?

Here, a man may say: Certainly, I aspire very keenly to attain a state of permanent mental purity but, in the vicious atmosphere as it prevails to-day, impure thoughts creep in." So, the question arises: 'How a householder, surrounded as he is by the vibrations of body consciousness, should enable himself to observe complete *Brahm charya* or continence?

Think of the reality of this body

If in spite of all these efforts on your part, it is the body that presents itself to your consciousness, you should place before yourself the reality of this body. Think of what is going on inside you. Even when you are looking at or thinking of the body, you should be able to say to yourself, "It is like a cage of bones or a framework of flesh; it is hollow, diseased and impure

it is made of elements which are unholy and low grade¹ and is born of sexual indulgence. In it is flowing, in diverse channels, blood tainted with ugly humours, wherein innumerable germs are lodged. Because the skin covers the ugly sight, we can't see it. So, it is foolish to be fondly attached to this mass of flesh and bones. We throw dust in our own eyes when we try to dip into this dirty bin and run madly after this vicious and hollow form which is bound to decay. Its youthful circumstances or its ornaments, which attract one, are short-lived and subject to change. I should not be a slave to the attractions of this image, made of perishable things, nor have any things to do with it. I am the child of Almighty, absolutely pure God, the Supreme Soul, the Source of all Bliss and, so, cannot be a dealer in skins and shall never do any base act. I know it very well that I shall, in this life, observe complete continence and earn release from hell and attain to deity sovereignty to last me for 21 successive existences. It is *Māyā* that throws a veil over my judgement as well as the body and turns to ashes all my *Gyā* (Divine Knowledge) and soul-consciousness. By drawing me away from God, *Māyā* means to enslave me, to hold me in bondage. I shall not any longer permit it to rule me because I now regard myself as a soul and see the soul in others also. Sooner or later, this body I shall have to shake off. Why should I then die for it?"

If man contemplates thus, his mind remains free of the impure thoughts of sex-lust and he feels in him a great stamina and also deep peace of yoga and drinks freely from the stream of bliss.

The Thought of the Primary²

In order to conquer sex-lust and live a viceless life, man has to know what is primary² as distinguished from that which is secondary. By knowing the former means proper understanding of one's own self which is one's soul, which is like a star, is eternally self-luminous and quite distinct from the body that is composed of the well-known five elements and is quite logically a child of the supremely pure Supreme Soul. As such, all souls, appearing in the form of so many men and women, are his brothers. Only when he learns all this, his outlook, thinking, habits and his character in general, begin to change along with the change of his *Sanskāras*. It is known to all that, as long as any man looks upon a certain woman as his sister, and *vice versa*, the vice called sex

1. तमोगुणी

2. 'असल' वास्तविक स्वरूप, प्राथमिक सत्ता

lust is dead. Hence, he who desires to be pure equipped with the virtue of *Brahmacharya* and with spiritual communion, should by applying his reason in this manner, learn and then remember what the reality is, because by means of this stable soul-consciousness outlook, his habits and thoughts do not lend themselves to the vice. Thus, with the application of this easy but real remedy, he succeeds in his high endeavour without recourse to what is called *Hatha-kriyā*. A Raja Yogi has this knowledge of the primary (soul) as different from the secondary (body) and, therefore, he leads his life without any carnal desires.

The thought of the lineage

If man ponders over what comes later than the primary state, i.e. what pertains to the family, (called *nasal*¹ or *vansha*² in Hindi), he will be greatly helped in the matter of maintaining continence. He should say to himself, when contemplating his family: "I primarily belong to the family of souls and, considering the physical lineage, I am also of the line of Brahma and Saraswati (Adam and Eve), Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana, or Shri Sita and Shri Rama and others who were dieties in their time. Therefore, I should also be as pure as those dieties were. I should not, in any manner, stain the fair name of the Deity dynasty". Besides this, he should always be meditating upon the fact that he, in reality, is a soul, essentially pure and existing like an infinitesimal but fully sentient star, abiding in the world of light, called *Paramdhām* where purity is the religion. Further, he will say to himself, "I shall not adjure my faith nor let my mind allow sensuality to creep in it." Since a yogi lives this faith, he leads a life of continence.

The Environment at home

Thus, considering himself to be the child of the Supreme Soul or member of the family of dieties, a yogi puts up in his home, pictures of Shiva, the Supreme Soul, as also of Shri Lakshmi, Shri Narayana, Shri Sita, Shri Rama and other dieties so that the atmosphere at home is *Sāttwic* or spiritual like that of a good temple or *Ashram*. These pictures are there to tell him that he is of the family of dieties and is a child of God. So, he does not act in a pernicious or lustful manner, for all wickedness which is indulged in by the ungodly, is forbidden for one who is of divine descent. All dirty pictures are, therefore, removed from his house because these render man body-conscious and vicious.

So, anyone who wishes to be a real yogi should regard his house as a temple. So long as one does not do so, lustfulness will continue to deal its darts on him. Also, there may be put up pictures, showing us invested with the crown of purity and a also a crown of gold. Such a picture will always be there to tell us that purity is the means of obtaining deity-sovereignty, as otherwise we shall lose our divine sovereignty and shall have to suffer punishments in *Dharmarāj-puri*¹ if we degrade ourselves by giving unto sex-lust.

Can home life not subsist without sensual gratification?

Now-a-days, some people think that life cannot go on in one's home if one were to dispel all thoughts of sexual indulgence. Such a view as this, is due to our forgetfulness or ignorance of our real Home. Man should know that *Brahmloka* is the soul's Home, it's pure abode from where it has come into this world. He should also know that this world was, in the beginning, a heaven, or in other words, the World of Purity. That means that sex-lust didn't at all exist then and that offspring came by dint of the power of yoga. Contrast it with the present: the world is a prison, held by *Māyā*, and is not a 'home' in any sense. It is easy to understand that the term, *Grihastha* (home-life) really means living here as you would be in *Brahmloka* or stabilising your mind in the remembrance of heaven. If anyone is so lucky as to set up, by means of his intellect, heaven or *Brahmloka* as his Home, he would never be visited by the idea that it is not possible to live in one's home without sexual indulgence.

Great Emergency

Atomic and hydrogen bombs, rival groups and opposing parties with their mutual disparities, scarcity of food or of money and several other allied situations are on the increase and are precursors of the coming destruction. God has already given us glimpses of events, and knowledge regarding the past, beginning with *Sat'yuga* to the present age, called *Kaliyuga*, and also the future, and has thus made every thing clear to us. Godly Knowledge apart, symptoms of coming Destruction are already here for anybody to see.

So, God, the Supreme Soul, says, "The present age is one of great emergency. Death is hovering over all. In times of crisis or death or when man is seriously ill, it is essential that he remembers God, listens to the recitation of the Gita and drinks the nectar of knowledge. This

1. The Region of the Supreme Adjudicator.

vice of sex-lust is a fell disease, and Destruction is but death in its severe form. So, when the whole world is in a state of crisis, it is obligatory for man to observe continence. By overcoming *Māyā* in these remaining years of life on earth, man shall be no less than a world conqueror.”¹

If, however, there is anyone who does not believe that Destruction is coming, he should at least tell himself, “No one knows when death will come nor does one know which moment’s breath is going to be his last; so, why should I not, from this very moment, start being pure”? To think that he is still in his youth, having been recently married and that there is still time for him to live to experience, at least for however short a while, the ‘pleasures’ of sex-lust, is to behave like an unmitigated fool. For, Death does not make any distinction between the young and the old, or announce its arrival. Even after the lapse of so many centuries, the wounds caused by the raging fires of vice are still gaping. Why should we think of having the experience of indulging in the vice of sensuality?

Hence, it is imperative for man to start making efforts this very minute, sooner rather than later, to overcome sex-lust and become self-controlled, as otherwise we shall have missed this opportunity of high endeavour. Time will be wasted, the load of evil actions will increase day-by-day, and the future will be as bad latencies.

1. माया जीते जगत्-जीत

ERADICATION OF FEAR AND ANXIETY

TODAY, man is surrounded by various types of fears. He finds it impossible to lead a fearless life. Fear of theft, fear of monetary loss in business, fear from bad elements in the society and fear of natural calamities and, above all, fear of death are the main kinds of fear in man's life. Different types of people are haunted by different types of fears. But, amongst them all, fear of death is the most common. People belonging to all walks, of life, whether high or low, rich or poor, have this fear. Though there are stages in life when one may not experience this fear much, e.g., when one is in the prime of his youth or when one is quite healthy and wealthy, but a stage comes when one starts fearing Death. When a serious disease overpowers someone, when one is shocked at the death of some near and dear one or when one is in political limelight (a fear of *coup*), then the fear of death raises its head in their minds. They are never sure that they can pass these crucial stages peacefully but are always under the fear of death. Here-below, an analysis of these aspects of human life has been discussed, which, if understood in its true perspective, can surely rid a man of this fear of death.

What Is Death?

A human being is not simply a human body. It is composed of a body, a skeleton of bones and flesh plus a conscient or sentient (*Chaitanya*) power, called 'Soul'. The body is subject to disintegration or decay and is, therefore, mortal whereas the soul is immortal, i.e., it cannot be cut, burnt or drowned. The body is just like a frame or a house or a garment for the soul. Just as a garment outlives its life after much use and is changed and the person puts on the new garment, similarly, the soul who performs all actions through the organs of the body, changes one body after it has played a role through that body and takes another body. This phenomenon of changeover of soul from one body to another is called 'death' which is *very natural* and, in this phenomenon, the mortal body—left by the soul—is destroyed.

All actions, whether good or bad, performed by the soul, during a particular period, through the medium of the body, leave their

impressions on the soul itself. These impressions are called '*Sanskāras*' (resolves). So the soul while leaving the body, carries with it all the impressions (*Sanskāras*) of the actions performed during that life on the basis of which it gets the new body, i.e., the new birth. Hence our happy life full of peace and virtues, or unhappy, miserable life—full of troubles, sufferings or turmoil—depends wholly on the basis of our past actions. It has been stated above that, after death, the body is destroyed but it is the soul which is indestructible and, so, it carries with it the impressions of our actions (resolves). Thus, the soul comes in the cycle of birth and death, i.e., it takes one body and leaves it again takes another body and so on.

Causes of the fear of Death

Some people think of that, after death, the soul may transmigrate into animal body in order to get the punishment of sinful actions. People shudder at this very thought. They think that they will become snakes or dogs or cats and, therefore, they want to evade death somehow or the other. But the point is that if at all it so happens, then they must keep off from sinful and vicious actions to avoid taking birth in an animal body. But no one does this. On the other hand, we find that people are committing more and more sins now-a-days.

Further, let it be known that such fear, as stated above, is unfounded, for in fact, human souls do not transmigrate into animal species, i.e. they take their rebirth in human bodies irrespective of their good or bad actions. Here, we must take into consideration the law of *karma* as enunciated by God Shiva. The human soul reaps the fruit of its good or bad actions in the human body itself, but the difference is, that, in case of bad and sinful actions, the human body which the soul gets, will be defective in some form or the other, e.g., it may be blind, lame or leper and, if at all his body is healthy, he may be born in a wicked family or in a family where he may be forced to beg alms or even resort to stealing, thus making his life unhappy and peaceless.

However, if we take the other side of the picture, i.e. we suppose for a while that the soul, in order to clear the account of bad actions, has to take animal body, then in the human body, which is now attained after purging all bad actions through animal body, there should not have been any suffering, misery or trouble of any kind—neither physical nor mental. This life must have been full of peace and happiness. But do we come across any such single person today? Majority of the people all over the world are in the grip of various types of suffering and misery and have no mental peace. With more reasoning and logic and, on the

basis of Godly Knowledge, being revealed unto us by God-Father Shiva Himself, we can say with firm conviction that it must be taken or granted that man, after death, gets his rebirth in human life and, so, he must allay all fears of death if they are based on the belief that it will migrate into lower species.

Death here means rebirth somewhere else

Secondly, when some dear or near relative passes away, the incident creates a wave of anxiety and fear when they think: "Shall we also meet the same fate?" Although they are fully aware of the fact that, one day or the other, everyone has to die, yet they shudder at this very thought. In fact, they forget that we, all of us, are the children of one God and that we come into this world like actors to play our individual part on the stage of this world for a short period, having individual names and appearances and associating with one another in different ways. Truly, we are actors in a vast drama, in the course of which everyone, after having played his part, shakes off the old body to be able to perform his part at another place in other environments. He, whom we considered our own son or brother (who has passed away) must have, in previous birth, played his part under a different name and form at some other place and, having finished his part there, left his mortal body there, appeared in our midst in new bodily frame. Here too, having done his part, he has passed on to a different region of activity under a different name and form. He, with whom we have squared up our accounts, is migrated away from our family circle and has passed on to another family somewhere else. Similarly, we, too, have to make our exit from the present scene, to be born somewhere else. Where they are making merry because of the birth of a new baby. Where lies the reason for fear?

Let us not forget that all things are transitory

Besides this, man has a deep sense of attachment with his beautiful and young body and he hopes to remain in that state for ever. This is like denying the law of decay of body. Then, he is proud of his status and his luxurious life. He thinks that he commands great respect and honour from all quarters and, so, he wants to continue in that stage. This is practically impossible. Impelled by the sense of attachment, he desires to have things otherwise impossible of achievement, irrespective of what the consequences are going to be. The example of Alexander, the Great, is before us. The man forgets the inexorable law of the transitoriness of the world. He forgets that his role in world drama will not be the same throughout. The scenes must change.

Fear due to physical Ailment

Further, let us suppose that a man is ill with a certain disease, which the doctor declares to be chronic and, therefore, serious. He, the diseased man, will sweat with terror, lose control over his body and begin to cry aloud and say that his heart is trembling. Why? All this is there because the fear of death has beset him. If a dear friend of his learns about this, his face also becomes pale or just white with panic and he is unable to utter a word. He is speechless and his eyes are getting moist because he fears his friend might die. Though the doctor has not declared him hopeless, yet the disease is such that its very name has filled his friends with fear and despair.

This kind of anxiety or fear is due to attachment or to the conscious or sub-conscious memory of bad actions. Either it is because that man is so much attached to his body that he is struck with terror to think of his death or it is fear born of anxiety makes him to say to himself, "I do not know what pains are in store for me before I die or what shall happen to me after death." This fear and anxiety is due to weak faith, or, in other words, to a beggarly account of worthy actions.

Fear of Public Opinion

Another kind of fear is due to fear of what others might say about him. Being weak-minded, he would always be thinking of what opinion the public will have about his actions. Here, lack of strong will or of divine knowledge or of the power of one's speech and persuasion and of one's faith, arouse fear. If he believed thoroughly that the step he has taken is rightly taken and after due deliberation, he need not fear calumny. If he possesses the strength that there is in one's speech, code of conduct, methods of working and intelligent behaviour, he will be at ease because he knows that he would be able to meet any criticism by making the critics understand facts as they are. Loss of self-confidence is there because his methods are not convincing enough, and, added to this, the lack of complete knowledge makes it impossible for him to face people. So, he is beset with anxiety. Doesn't this mean that the spirit of fear grips him because he knows that he lacks the capacity to stand his ground?

Fear of Grave Situations

There is also the fear of unwanted and grave situations. Sometimes, man, because he has already got a predisposition to fear, makes small things appear dreadful, and when the situation is dreadful

enough, he starts up in fear, exclaiming, "What's to do, O God? I don't know what is in store for me!" Suppose a boy is not yet home after school. This does not warrant getting into a funk, but, the latencies of fear being already stored in her, the mother becomes anxious. She fears that there has been an accident. "He may have slipped, or himself jumped or been pushed into the river that flows by the way he returns home", she thinks. Thus, her *attachment* to the boy and fear as its consequences will start her on a course of guesses. Guess work will increase fears, and her heart will begin going pit-a-pit. It is possible that anyone in this condition resigns his being.

Similarly, some people are inclined, through fear, to take simple matters to be of dreadful import. In other words, they, of their own accord, give birth to fear, which, in its turn, holds them in its grip, though it cannot be denied that there are particular kinds of situations which are truly terrifying. Suppose someone has deposited his money in a business about which he learns that it has failed. Naturally, he is not only anxious but overcome with fear and cannot say what is in store for him. Let us think of a man seated on the roof of a house. A sudden earthquake sends him into shivers. Even this kind of fear has its origin in one kind of floundering or another or in one's actions of the past.

Fear of harm from other human beings

Next, we take the case of one's fear of other human beings. The possibility of others' attacks or their plans to cause him loss, creates fear which is due to deficiency of divine virtues. With him who has divine virtues, very few will be displeased. If anyone gets to be inimical to him, his good qualities will make the former come to be friendly with him, work with him so much so that he would be ready to sacrifice even his life for him if occasion arose. Besides this, he believes firmly that his tolerance, cheerfulness, humility, yoga, friendliness and philanthropy or servicefulness bring about transformation even in him who has been annoyed with him.

Lack of Self-Confidence

Sometimes, fear is due to deficiency of one's own reasoning powers. This fear accompanies man wherever he be as it arises without any effort as it were. Because he is not intelligent enough or lacks self-confidence, he is in constant fear and anxiety lest his actions should produce the wrong result or fail to meet people's approbation or anger them.

Whatever the kind of fear, one thing is clear. It is that, in all cases, there is deficiency either of divine knowledge, Yoga, faith, will-power or of divine conduct, for it is deficiency of this kind that weakens the quality of renunciation of body-consciousness, sense of attachment and various distracting thoughts and feelings. And, inadequate renunciation, i.e. surrender to God, engenders fear and anxiety.

How can fear be eliminated?

Now the question : "How can all fears and anxieties be eliminated?" Fear, it is said, saps the blood and makes man feel that he is no longer alive. Anxiety is only another name for the funeral pyre.

In order to eliminate fear, the deficiency in its respective forms has to be made up to eradicate fear and anxiety. Fear of death needs to be treated with divine knowledge and soul-consciousness. Man must have wisdom enough to think that he has reposed his trust entirely in the Almighty Father and that, in the present auspicious epoch, called *Sangam yuga*, i.e. the period of conjunction of Iron Age and Golden Age, his star is in the ascendant¹ and that there is good in everything that happens to him.

Faith in and Surrender to God

If even in his state of unsound health also, he continues to be resting in God Shiva's guidance, the latter will surely have to shoulder his burdens. If he departs from this world, He will surely arrange everything for his good, for it goes without saying that he who is obedient to him till there is life in him and, having surrendered his mind and body to Him, makes Him his only support, shall see that He is true to him till the last by comforting him always and does not give him up till He blesses him with him full Fruition. He does not let him be tossed about in whirlpool or in malestrom.

In all respects, there is good embedded in surrender to God, the Supreme Soul. There is blessedness in life, and while in death, there is no ill-fortune. Taking this as the subject of reflection, he has no reason to be worried. He should, on the other hand, draw, by means of divine remembrance, strength from the Supreme Lord, who is the mainstay of the infirm. Otherwise, by forgetting Him, we get to be concerned with the body only and thus come to have body-consciousness, from which springs attachment to the body. Man is, therefore, visited by the

1. चढती युगः Chaddti Kala

monster of fear and carries forward, to his next existence, this attachment and these latencies of Fear. Or, it may be that, on account of these very feelings, his soul takes on the subtle shadowy form of his own body and turns into a wraith—*Bhoota*. It is clear that it is always good to be ever in a state of remembrance of God and to have faith in his bright future and welfare. Having thus understood, where right lies, we should be soul-conscious and aware of raising our fortune to be able to see Fear off.

As for fear of what others might say, it has already been said that its origin lies in deficiency of faith or confidence in one's own self. If man has faith that he is following the advice of God, who is the giver of divine knowledge and is infallible, and that God's ways are the highest, why should he fear others' opinions, criticism or censure? Dogs may bark but the saint or caravan goes on and, so, the saint or the persons in the caravan would be wrong to regard themselves as thieves.

Have Self-Confidence

If they did so, they would only prove that they do not know or have faith in themselves. Now that God is with us, nothing is left to be desired nor there is anything to disquiet us. Fear of Mrs. Grundy and Mr. Slander disappears only when one does not worry or is ever-unmindful of what they say, and is ever in ecstasy of union with the Divine. Sure enough, ecstasy will stay only when faith is well-founded. Man can be rid of the fetters of this Fear by getting clear ideas, by increasing his experience and the force which there is in self-confidence.

To those who slander you, you should say, "Mr. so and so, which is the name by which people know me, is long since dead and is now in the lap of God, having become a different being. This one, whom you are censuring is following a Mighty Monarch. He is guided by Him who is the intelligence of the intelligent, and from whom, because He is Almighty, and the whole world begs the gift of divine wisdom. He is not following the advice of any human being as you might be thinking. Even that wonderful and extraordinary one who is our beloved and revered adviser—*Prjapita Brahma*—even he is working under the directions of that Almighty Being. By carrying out the commands of Him, who is the Supreme Soul, man obtains release from the clutches of *Māyā* and lives a viceless, holy and excellent life."

You should further say to those who slander you, "Observing the purification in the lives of so many persons in the divine institution I attend, do you not understand who the modeller of their lives is? If you

think it is not the Supreme Soul, he must at least be a high soul—a *Mahātmā*. If even this is not acceptable to you, is it possible for us to be freed from evil and to become good without any help and as if by a miracle? If you still do not believe this, do not take malicious delight in trying to kill our faith. We, not you, have to account for our actions."

Speak to the people with the courage of conviction

How can anyone be responsible for others' actions when, as things are at present, he is not able to shoulder his own responsibilities for the way he leads his life or does actions? He cannot discharge his responsibilities duly as is evident from his present diseased, sad and unholy ways. When he, who claims that he can lead others aright, does not live a good life, how can he inspire them with the faith that he will improve their life? How can we abandon Him under whose directions we are rendering our lives excellent and experiencing purity and peace thereby, and all because someone tells us to abandon Him?

So, we should tell our slanderers: "Do you know anything about inscrutable ways that action takes to produce its results? When you have not known what it is to follow, whose advice we have taken, why should you be led into earning a load of sins for nothing by criticising us for by trying to put obstacles in our path? The sensible man sees things for himself, reflects upon them and then arrives at a conclusion. Have you seen any bad feature in us to make you criticise us? Do you regard purity, celibacy, discipline, and ethical code as evils? If so, we will not abandon God and purity even at the cost of our lives. He who slanders us is our friend, because we thereby pay attention to improving still more our life and actions, knowing all along that this slander, you indulge in, will do away with some of our sins."

You should reflect then and, filling your soul with the flavour of yoga, you should speak sweetly and with self-respect, without any fear and with spiritual force in your veins. Thus will the erstwhile imposing walls of conventional propriety crumble down and some of your worldly ties will be gone. By remembrance of the Almighty God as also by your own form of might, you will be rid of the foolish gregariousness and lack of initiative that characterises sheep.

If, however, we cannot easily get rid of ties, we should, by our remembrances of God, the Supreme Soul, convert, because of our love of Him, the prison-house of the habits of wicked people into a hermitage for holding spiritual communion, and ask Him for the opening of their World of Reason. But, man should understand that the body alone, not

the mind, can be fettered. So, if the body was imprisoned, the mind will, by dint of Godly remembrance, ward off Fear and pass the test.

The fear arising from unwanted situations has its roots, as has already been told you, in some kind of attachment to or deep fondness for someone or some thing, and the desire for reward. Besides, deficiency in intelligence, discrimination or will-power accounts for fear of this kind. Getting confused in face of dreadful contingencies and laying down of arms out of fear, makes man suffer bewilderment and worry. So, the right thing to do is to maintain equilibrium.

Let us be stabilised in equanimity and our original nature

Adoption of alien ways produces nothing but sorrow, whereas taking up one's own essential line of conduct is ultimately good. Not like a chameleon that changes its colour when in strange lands, but by being established in all situations, in one's own intrinsic states of equality, we shall ultimately get happiness, because it is essential that we keep hold of ourselves before we set to facing a difficulty. This holding ourselves firm will give us strength, as otherwise we cannot overcome a crisis without making sure of ourselves. In the process of setting yourself right and linking your thoughts and memory with God, the power of discrimination will grow in strength and become sharp enough to guide you through the intricacies of an exigency.

Remember : Only the Pre-ordained will come about

To be puzzled when there is a situation to face is to be afraid of the feeling that you have yourself created. Whatever is pre-ordained will come about. But to say, "O Rama, what is in store for me?" is the 'wards' way of thinking. Hasn't Rama, the Incorporeal God, warned us that the present unrighteous world is going to be destroyed and the righteous world is being established instead, and that, if people's minds are turned away from Him, they also will be caught in the maelstrom of destruction whereas if they turn to Him, they will have salvation and blessedness? Now that He, the Supreme Father, the giver of joy to all, has described the story of the past, the present and the future and said all this in unequivocal terms about our future, it is futile to give away to despair, which, in the present circumstances, points to our ignorance and blindness.

or God brings order out of chaos, and removes our distress. But, alas, instead of finding refuge in Him, we eschew remembrance of Him and, instead of drawing strength from Him, rush into the arms of Fear and be at cross purposes with Him, and, thereby, suffer *Māyā*'s blows for want of faith in Him so much so that we are in a fix what to do. All this amounts to inviting dangerous attacks of fear. Consequently, leaving aside knowledge (not to speak of reflection on it), halting one's spiritual communion and ceasing to think of virtues—this is what is meant by Arjuna's throwing away his celebrated *Gāndīva* bow and forgetting the very first lesson that *The Gītā* gives—the lesson that we should determine what is to be done and what is to be discarded. Accurate knowledge in this respect has been given to us by the Supreme Soul, and it is our bounden duty to translate it into practice. It is our duty, which we have to discharge, God will only show us the way, which we have ourselves to tread. We are not to expect Him to do the walking for us. Not God, but we have to reach the goal.

By dint of God-consciousness, trouble will disappear as if by magic

Rama or God will no doubt help but we will have to set about our tasks with courage. Hence, by merely uttering the name 'Ramji', the situation facing us as a result of our actions in the past is not going to disappear entirely. If we obey God's commands, and rest in His remembrance lovefully and be stable there and then face situations, these will vanish as if by magic, like a hair from a ball of butter. To put it in other words, these will have as little effect upon us as a small thorn would in place of the stake. But, if we do not hand ourselves over to Rama or do neither hold Him responsible for our welfare nor discharge the responsibilities laid on our shoulders, we cannot hope to get all the help that we need. Dedication to Him will end all our worries, so, if fear at all arises, we have really run short of faith in Him.

What leads to Fear unseen?

From the above lines, we can clearly draw one inference. In all types of circumstances mentioned above, man has feelings of suffering and sorrow because he is body-conscious. By considering himself to be a physical body, he begins to form purely physical links of various kinds with other bodied beings and, consequently, forgets the soul's link with the Supreme Soul who is the Remover of sorrow and the Bestower of happiness. With corporeal beings, he sets up the connections, the essence of which is the feelings of attachment. In the event of any lo

defeat or grief, he considers it to be cause of sorrow for himself. All this is due to body-consciousness. If, during his lifetime, he is in soul-conscious state and plays his role in this world drama like an actor, he can very confidently face all adverse circumstances which come before him. He will play his role in his family, in his business or in his office with sense of detachment. He will not allow any fears to overpower his emotions about leaving his own body.

Thus, in order to be completely fearless in all respects, we have to kill this body-consciousness which eats the power of the soul like a white ant. We should start practising soul-consciousness and, weaning away from any attachment to the purely physical side of events and individuals. We should be totally engaged in remembrance of God Shiva, the Supreme Father of all souls. For this, we should acquire the knowledge of what the soul and the Supreme Soul are. In the absence of that knowledge, resting in total awareness of the soul or remembering God with concentration or devotion is an impossibility.

Mass Scale Deaths In Near Future

We are, presently, passing through the transitional period called the confluence of the end of Iron age and the beginning of Golden Age. The world has become 100 per cent irreligious, unrighteous, sinful and vicious. The moral and ethical values of man have vanished as a result of which we have seen the genocide and massacre in East Bengal, Middle East, Far East and Indo-China. As per the master plan of world drama, the destruction of the present vicious Iron-aged world must take place in the near future. For this, high-powered nuclear bombs and missiles of Mahabharata-fame have been invented like 5000 years ago. The other forms of destruction will be natural calamities and civil wars.

All of us, willingly or unwillingly have to leave our mortal bodies here before returning to our *Paramdhām*. Simultaneously, the big task of re-establishment of Golden-aged world, which will soon ensure after the forthcoming destruction, is being accomplished by Heavenly God Father Shiva through Prajapita Brahma and his spiritual progeny—Brahma Kumāris and Brahma Kumars. We should, therefore, without any further delay, engage ourselves in purification of our souls by learning Godly Knowledge and practising Raja Yoga and thus purge all our past vicious actions so that we may descend in the new Golden-aged deity world (*Amarlok*) in new viceless body.

In the new deity world of 100% peace, purity and happiness, the souls of the highest order will descend. They are called 'Amar' (immor

tal) in the sense that they live their full life which is entirely free from all vices, worries and tensions and there are no untimely and sudden deaths. caused by any accident or disease. They are in '*Jiwan Muk*t' state, i.e. completely liberated from all phases of life. That happy and peaceful long life is the result of their virtuous actions performed by them in their previous birth, i.e. at the present period of end of Iron age, by virtue of Godly Knowledge and Raja-yoga. Hence, when one is so confident, of one's bright future lives; and when confidence is truly based on one's righteous actions, then why should there be any fear of death at all now?

Thus, in view of the foregoing, we should eradicate all fear of death completely and, instead, engage our mind and intellect in constant remembrance of God, so that our thoughts, words and deeds may be purified to the extent of maximum degree.

FREEDOM FROM WORRY, FEAR AND NERVOUSNESS

HEART diseases take a heavy toll of human life these days. It has been found that worry, fear and tension due to strained relations are among the major causes of heart trouble. Worry and fear seriously affect man's physical and mental health and rob him of happiness and peace.

It has been discovered that those who have religious faith or those who believe that God is their protector, have more peace than others who have nothing to set their moorings on. Their faith works like shock-absorbers.

So, if we want to be free of anxieties and fright, let us think that God has taken upon Himself our responsibilities and taken in hand our own well-being. As soon as you hand over charge to Him, you should clearly lay it down that you should not let yourself interfere with Him but obey Him fully. If you are obeying Him or are as yet ready to obey, you have no reason to be afraid. The ship of our life may be tossed about in storms due to our own actions of the past, but, because God is at the helm, it will never sink. On the contrary, if we are assailed by fears which make us lose self-confidence, it is possible that the ship will get capsized and will even sink, just as a boat capsizes when the passengers in fright run about helter-skelter. So, when you have fears that your boat will be upset, chuck off these fears, which are in themselves the cause of an upset and even loss. While you fear a storm coming, you must understand that it is going to be there because it is our own past activity that has brought it on us. If you desire to ride these storms, God alone will ferry you across. Resign yourself to Him, but, mind you, do not counteract His mandate nor let your desires cross it. Make your *Buddhi* stable. Hand over fear and anxieties to Him and earn His boon of freedom from them.

Fear of a person

One fears a man due to deficiency in his own virtues and spiritual strength. Influenced by a bad habit of his own, man behaves badly towards someone and, naturally, has fears of retribution. Or, it may be

that this person fears a wicked, quarrelsome and cunning fellow who is bent harming him at the instance of a third person. His conspiracy may harm him or his associates. But, if he possesses virtue and is spiritually strong, he believes that he will manage the affair and keep this individual in hand. Instead of getting worried unduly, all you need to do is, to be modest, affectionate and helpful so that, if at all he is in fault, he should admit his mistake. But, if he does not admit his fault or he is a strange creature, we should rely upon truth and upon God and be unworried and face events by means of our own divine virtues. Many a one would be on our side and we shall win, provided we are inspired with the strength there is in virtue, proceeding as we shall then be with sweetness, tolerance, humility, love and the spirit of service. Even if the outcome is not favourable to us, there is no point in increasing our misery through fear. We shall meet situations as they arise. In a few years, all that we see around us is to be no more. Can there be anything so far reaching as that? Why should we flinch before this small though deplorable event? When we are supported by purity, Divine Knowledge and Yoga, we do not wince before the prospect of world Destruction?

The weapons to counteract fear

A man under attack is struck with terror if he has no weapons in hand at that time. There is either no fear or only slight fear when weapons of one kind or another are ready for use. So, if any situation arouses fear in man, that is because he is short of weapons of Divine Knowledge or Yoga. Either he lacks faith or he has laid up somewhere the unerring weapons of Gyān and Yoga, stacked them and stored them safe in a box. At this moment, they are not with Him and, being out of practice, he cannot handle them, as otherwise he should have been calm and courageous. In that case, he would understand that, in whatever forms *Māyā* would mount her attack, God had granted him the ability to recognise all these shapes and understand *Māyā*'s tactics. Besides this, we should remember that Shiva Baba has equipped us with such weapons as are potent enough to enable us to fight back *Māyā*. Even now we are receiving strength from God above and shall certainly be victorious.

Which are these weapons? The conch, the *Chakra* (The Wheel) the mace and the lotus—these are the weapons. By dint of the *Sudarshan Chakra* and the mace, man rides out the storms of *Māyā*. But if weapons of attack are not accompanied by those of defence, there is fear to some extent. That defence is Knowledge of the World Drama.

Freedom from Nervousness

Nervousness is just one form of fear or anxiety. To have panic over anything that has happened or has the possibility of happening is the sign and symptom of a frightened man. However slightly harmful anything might appear to be, a nervous person would at once exclaim "Ah, horrible! A strange thing has happened."¹ His eyes and the lines on his face suffer change, though this should not happen because what has happened cannot be undone and has happened exactly according to the play of events already determined in the World Drama according to his present or past actions which carry their fruit with them. It is wrong to doubt this and say that a wrong thing has taken place. This Drama is so well-made that there is no scope for correction or amendment. To all events that happen one after the other, during the course of this Drama, there is a cause, a deep significance. Whether we observe it or not is of no consequence to it. Hence it is useless to wish events to be otherwise and to say that the effect would have been different if the thing in question had not happened. Any mental exercise of this type is waste of time and a means of displaying one's own variety. Whatever has happened is happening and will happen according to a plan, predetermined on the basis of our actions, and so, we have to see that our activity should be viceless and undeviating. Instead of talking of corrections to be made in the world plan, man should engage in improving himself. His future will thus be ameliorated and fear and anxiety will have already fled to make it easy for him to establish a firm and stable state of self and thus to be free from nervousness.

Fears, anxiety or nervousness cannot change events. So, we have to use our best endeavours and simply be unaffected by the results, like a neutral person, for we can but only make efforts. If we can transform a situation, we can do so only by our own action. So, we should work nobly and with full zest, but to be nervous, to have worry or have fears about its result and be miserable is not high activity; it is a silly or foul thought, i.e. a vice. By thus causing pain to oneself, one comes to be included among those who are considered idlers or those who have fallen from the state of yoga, or doubting Thomases or those who themselves place obstacles in their way and thus harm themselves.

Always remember that this world is a Drama

That man forgets very often the fact that the world is a Drama or a play on a vast scale is the main cause of his fear and anxiety. The film of

1. डर, डर गया...त...त, यह क्या हो गया!

the events of the world, as they unfold themselves, was shot in times beyond man's memory, the present event being the scene displayed at the moment on the film. It is a repetitive drama. Whatever happened 5000 years ago in the previous showing of this very film is going to happen now. Nothing else is to come about. That is why there is the well-known saying: "Only the pre-ordained is happening, nothing new is going to be interpolated." No change at any point there can be made. This story is made on the basis of our *Karmas*. Our future is cast in the shape of our actions, done in the past. What is to be cannot be annulled. So, why shall we worry or have fears?

Proper attitude towards events

So, one important thing man should remember is that the world is like a play or a game and we should take victory or defeat in a sportsman-like spirit. Living this knowledge of the world as a drama, man finds in it his defence against the enemy, called nervousness whose doings he can thus watch without wincing. A man who looks on this world as a Drama, marks his own part as he would mark another's and thus witnesses its process. Therefore, he would not tell himself in despair that he has no solution in view, for he is shorn of all disturbing thoughts. While doing his best, he is not burdened with anxiety about the results but he is unmoved by and disengaged, as it were, from what the results would be, because he believes that what is to happen will certainly come about, exactly as it happened in the previous cycle. He will thus be forewarned: "Numberless times I have played my part in this Drama. I have no anxiety because God is solicitous about me. I am like a self-abnegated person who has no burdens to carry and am, therefore, free from fear and anxieties. All that I have to think of is God to whom I have consigned all these other things, like my future, to be thought over."

It should be noted that a yogi follows God's bidding¹ at every step and those who carry out His high and gracious commands are relieved of fear. Hence, one who is a Yogi and a self-renounced person, his Reason is not in any way depressed. He is always light like an angel. If any distracted person asks him what turn the events will take, he would say that it would be exactly as it was 5000 years ago. Thus he looks on like a neutral.² If he is informed about any loss or defeat or any other event unfavourable to him and is asked what he would do as his plans have failed, he would simply say, "Dear friends, this is nothing new, for it has

1. ईश्वर ।

2. अक्षुब्ध, अचल ।

happened innumerable times before; so I need not be nervous. All this is a part of a pre-determined Drama, and, so, whatever happens next will be observed by both and you and me without getting perturbed or letting loose a horde of useless thoughts." What I have to be thinking of is the remembrance of Shiva Baba (God) and doing good deeds and washing away all bad actions of the past by dint of yoga lest I should suffer punishment at the Court of Dharmaraja. This is the only thought which is beneficent, all the rest is an exercise in futility." Such-like thoughts enable a man to be free from nervousness.

EQUANIMITY AND EQUIPOISE

SPIRITUAL seekers generally want to know why in spite of efforts, their Equipoise is shaken now and then and why their mind fluctuates. Referring to this problem, Shiva Baba has explained that *Māyā* is the factor behind it all. Inability to stand the inroads of jealousy, fear, slander, regard for conventions¹ and obstacles in general, the load of the vices or *Samskāras*, ideological clashes with one another, difference of views and insufficient strength to pass these and other ordeals—all these singly or in combination—do not let him stay imperturbed. These try first of all to break his faith² and then his spiritual fervour, his resignation to God and his yoga. *Māyā* catches man at his weak points while, sometimes, it lays seige to him on all sides to win him over, trying her wiles to vanquish him and tire him into a swoon or lay him low. Hence, to maintain equilibrium, man should understand and learn by practice who God is, what *Māyā* is and what his own efforts to counter *Māyā* should be. Truly, it is not difficult to know God, for He is one, He is ever undisturbed. True knowledge is one because it has only one true interpretation. *Māyā*, on the other hand, adopts several different forms so much so that, at times, it appears to us in a divine garb. So, now that we have already explained the various ways of cultivating in ourselves the virtues of inwardliness, tolerance, fortitude, contentment and humility and of eradicating fearlessness and of giving up the five vices, one should now be able to understand that, in order to acquire equilibrium, one has to practise virtues such as Humility, Continence, Patience, Tolernace, etc., in daily life. Better still, than any of these above-mentioned ways, is to hear God's versions every day, attending the class and getting one's difficulties removed by wiser and more spiritually-minded sisters and brothers and learning thereby all one needs to learn.

How to attain stability in Spirituality?

The extent to which you abandon the vices, acquire devotion and remain in the state of soul-consciousness and remember

¹ However rotten
² faith

and lay firmly and deeply the foundations of divine knowledge and faith will determine the extent to which you will acquire stability in spirituality. Only by means of complete freedom from disturbing thoughts and, with an even temper, man will achieve the last goal, which is repose in one's own spiritual essence. The supports that man, today, has adopted are unstable; his mind strays away from the ways of purity; the body of which he is conscious, is in itself transcient, mutable and perishable; the 'sweet things of life' which he is pursuing are short-lived. How can he, in this way, keep an even temper? God alone is eternally even-mined. The best way of attaining to that state of evenness is to rest our mind, with all our senses, fixed on Him, even the blood coursing to His tune.

We are being observed by others

Shiva Baba has given us knowledge of several other methods. He says, "Consider this world a stage on which you are playing your part which is being observed by all the 500 crores and more souls of human beings." This way you will direct your attention completely to your own actions and will thereby attain to an unshakable high state. Suppose an individual is seated on the stage along with those who are to speak. During the course of the speech of one of these, this individual begins to yawn, is getting into a doze and presently drops. And when he is told that the audience have been watching him, he will, at once, sit awake and upright with a feeling of shame at what they must be thinking of him. So, should we, as Shiva Baba says, be quite attentive to ourselves if we consider ourselves to be on the stage of life, and subject to the observation of others. So, the fact of the matter is that when anyone has received Divine Knowledge and starts to impart it to others, they will, all of them, watch how he behaves and what he thinks.

Also, when anyone sits before a camera to get his picture taken, he sits most properly; all things about him are set in a tip-top condition and he does not make the slightest movement lest the picture should be spoiled. He also wears a smile so that the picture shows a good feature of his. So does Shiva Baba say that we are passing through Sangam Yuga and the picture of the part that we are to play in the future lives is being taken now to make what we call by the term, "the inevitable¹ or the future." Keeping this in a view, we do not let anything to perturb or shake us to this time when the picture is being taken, i.e. when shooting is taking place.

*Hathayogis*¹ as well as *Tattwayogis*¹ say that when anybody starts the practice of yoga, he should sit thoroughly erect, shut his eyes and not move his body. But Shīva Baba says, "The Rajayogi should leave aside the question of the body and never let his mind wander about, should shut the eye that has been used to look at the Iron-aged, Kaliyugi world and set the sights of his mind to the right point. This way he shall not be shaken."

In the same strain does Shiva Baba say, "There are surely the attacks of *Māyā* to come in the present unrighteous times. *Māyā* will try numerous ways of shaking or impairing our faith just as the devilish solidiers in Ravana's employ had tried their best to move Angada's leg. So, you should stand firm like Angada.³ The name 'Angada' suggests two ideas, appropriate to the point. All one's limbs (*Anga*, means a limb) are dedicated (*Da* i.e. given) to Him shows the real Angada. *Maya* cannot make him budge an inch. He will, on the other hand, be unshakably firm without winking an eye. Hence, the way of continuing firm in this position is to surrender to God, the Supreme Soul, all one's sense-organs, becoming, like Angada, the bearer of God's message to others. Surely, *Māyā* will lose the battle and we shall be unmoved.

Shiva Baba says further, "Any shopkeeper will naturally keep in his show-case his wares in the best manner possible and place them in the best of light. Similarly, we should understand that we are the living specimen wares in the show cases of the Centres of Godly Knowledge and divine service, so that others who look on, come to like us and are emboldened to think of receiving this Godly Knowledge. Hence, we have to shoulder the great responsibility of setting a good example for the world at large, and be thus fit to have a place in the show-case. Thus, if we adopt this method as also others already set out, with an eye to discarding bad habits and learning good ones, our life will become noble, tranquil and even.

1. Those who practise physical posture or yoga of Penance.

2. Those who contemplate on Brahm as an all pervading principal.

3. Angada is a famous character in Ramayana—The well-known epic. He took Rama's message to Ravana. Here Ravana symbolises Maya and Angada symbolises one who conveys God's message of purity to others. The name Angada is a Sanskrit word which literally means: One who has given (surrendered) all his physical organs (to God).

THE HABIT OF MARKING DEFECTS IN OTHERS

PICKING holes in other's coats is a very bad habit. It indicates haughtiness in him who engages himself in this dirty hobby of noticing defects in others. It does not only pain or annoy those who are targets on one's fault-finding, back-biting, criticism or ridicule but it also leaves bitter taste in the mouth of him who indulges into this vice. Let us illustrate this by an example:—

Suppose a man, Mr. X, is habitually curt and dry. He says 'No' whenever he is asked to do any thing. Now Mr. Y, who marks this habit of Mr. X and thinks over it, will himself also feel ill-at-ease because of this bad behaviour of Mr. X. Observing this trait of Mr. X very often, will rouse his ire and will pain him, the result being that he himself will become peaceless and then say to himself that he would make Mr. X feel the consequences and will thus set him right. Reflecting thus, Mr. Y will disturb his own state of mind and be himself a loser in the bargain. He will not feel happy, relaxed or normal but would feel 'fed up', irritated and restless.

This feeling is like 'flue'

So, Shiva Baba has said that the feeling that results from this vice is like influenza. We all know that a man suffering from 'flue' feels that his bones are broken and that the pain coursing through his veins provokes him in spite of himself. He feels that he is tied down like a prisoner, his mouth is bitter and the fever is high. Similarly, the fault-finder, who has the feeling like the one mentioned above, has large number of disturbing thoughts, one after another, only to tire and trouble his mind, and every vein of his is overcome with fatigue and lassitude to see others' bad habits and misbehaviour and, ultimately, he falls supine as it were to the ground.

We try to cure the man, suffering from flues, by means of medicine and try to prevent others from falling prey to it. In the same way, we have to take care to see that we are safe from this ugly habit of grinning and moaning over others' defects, for it is a mental disease, infectious and severe like the flue. We should, therefore, give up observing others' demerits as otherwise this small germ of 'feeling' will bring on the

disease. Secondly, we should have nothing to do with anyone who has this vice of picking holes and backbiting.

If, however, in spite of these precautions, we are attacked by this disease, we must quicken in ourselves love for the Supreme Soul and for the God-family which comprises souls who are studying Divine Knowledge. We should listen to accounts of God's deeds rather than waste our precious little time, and spoil our mood by marking bad points in others. We should never be wanting in compassion and should help others to get out of the bog of vices rather than hate them. If at all some defects of others engage our attention, they should raise our thoughts about any demerits in us and should make us more earnest in eradicating our own bad habits, thinking that others must be considering these as so many, thorns.

Displeasure is another form of this vice

By introducing the comparison of the said feeling to flue 'Shiv Baba has very well elucidated man's propensity towards marking others' demerits. Besides this, displeasure is another form of this vice. If there is a bad quality in Mr. X, Mr. Y gets displeased with Mr. X. If he notices any bad quality in a *Gyāni*—one who is attaining Divine Knowledge—he is so annoyed as to say; "Are these the qualities of a *Gyāni*? Is holy wisdom to be of this stamp?" Thus, minding this bad side of the man-of-knowledge, he gets so deeply annoyed that he gets fed up with this kind of Divine Knowledge, yoga and all. The result is that, in his mood of displeasure, he, ultimately, withdraws himself from God and from those who are dedicated to Him and to the study of Divine Knowledge. All this leads to the conclusion that, in his mood of resentment, he is lost to his own endeavours and his fortune. The sight of only one bad quality in others makes him so angry that he sees no use of Knowledge of the Supreme Soul and snaps his link with God. His loss, consequently, is so great that he loses sovereignty of the deity world.

Always have a high ideal unto You

Truly, this is a huge loss. That is why, in spiritual parlance, it is known as a fatal disease. There have been instances of people who have run away from the battle with *Māyā* after having marked a defect or defects in the thoughts, habits and inclinations of others. Those who run away from the battlefield are real renegades from good fortune. Shiva Baba, therefore, warns us to be safe from this fatal disease of picking holes in others' coats. He says, "Always remember that, as yet, no one has become perfect and that everyone has in him one

shortcoming, weakness or defect or another. You should have the ideal of perfection in view but should never expend your energy over thinking of those who do not put in adequate efforts, because these are not the ideals for you. Taking these as examples for yourself, you will be lost if and when they become degenerate". God alone is perfect. He is the only One for us to copy, and next to Him, we should have before us those who are known as Prajapita Brahma and Jagadamba Saraswati¹, who are in the Human World the most versed in Divine Knowledge and virtue. Giving up the bad habit of seeing the mote in others' eyes, we have to see if we possess, or try to possess divine qualities as many as and as much as these two souls had.

When a painter is drawing a portrait or is copying a portrait already done, he does all along compare his work with the original to see whether the eyes, the face, the mood, the expression, etc. delineated by him are true to the original or not. Exactly, in this manner, we should compare our life with the life led by Pitashree Brahma and Mateshwari Saraswati—in order to find if our mood does not change like the plant, known as 'Touch-me-not'² which is known for changing its contours. We should see that our mood is as stable and cheerful as that of these two very eminent souls. Their eyes bespoke their calmness, civility and love. Have we such eyes? Is there in our actions the sparkle of divinity that there was in every action of theirs? We shall never have the time to see faults in others nor ever think of seeing spots in them provided we place before ourselves an ideal of this kind and remove our own shortcomings and demerits.

It has been explained above how very valuable it is to take them as ideals in order to conduct ourselves excellently. But, unluckily, we keep the wrong picture before us to copy. Now we will see what other forms this vice takes.

Wrong Assumptions and False Conclusions

Very often this vice appears in the form of wrong assumptions or false calculations.³ What is meant by this is that, several times, man misunderstands people. His guess about another man may be wrong; the latter may not have those faults which the former thinks the latter has. Without ascertaining the truth, the former depends upon his own views to form a bad opinion of that person. While dealing with him, these

1. Also called Adam and Eve—The progenitors of human race.

2. छुई-मुई : The plant called 'Mimosa'.

3. मिथ्या अनुमान ।

demerits which are the products of imagination and guess-work, are, as it were, stored in the former's thought and show themselves in his attitude.

For example, Mr. X is invited to dine at Mr. Y's. Mr. X, because he has an eye for others' demerits, thinks that Mr. Y has a selfish motive in inviting him to get his work done over the feast. The truth, on the other hand, is that it was out of love for him that he was invited, but the person who is inclined to spot faults only by guess-work, wrongly thinks he (Y) is very selfish and had invited him, the august person; to dinner, for his own ends. Thus *imagining* that any one has faults is a very common but strange kind of form of this vice. Now-a-days, people *make guesses* about one another and go on polluting their minds thus and commit the vice of degenerating others by spreading slanders, based on imagination or hearsay.

Let us take an instance from the Ramayana. The notorious Manthra calculated that, in the event of Rama being crowned as king, he will treat Kaikeyi as also Bharata and Shatrughna as servants. Goaded by this false presumption, she poisoned the ears of Kaikeyi so much so that she was deaf to all that Dashratha said to her. And, the consequence was simply dreadful. Rama was exiled, Bharata was separated from Rama and poor Dashratha died, leaving behind a trail of misery and discord. This was the result of Manthra's false premises, assumptions and imaginary evils. Kaikeyi too fell in with her. Even to-day people are prone to believe quickly in whatever reaches them through hearsay or guess-work or by way of pure fancy, because they not only do not exercise their own reasoning faculties but turn a deaf ear to what their dearest and nearest ones say just as Kaikeyi did towards Dashratha.

Envy or Selfishness is the cause

If we think for a moment why Manthra made wrong assumptions, we will come to the conclusion that it was because she was Kaikeyi's maid-servant and she could fulfil her selfish aims only if Bharata become the ruler. Towards Kaushalya, the co-wife of Kaikeyi, a feeling of envy was born in her and in Manthra's mind. Selfishness gave birth to hear-burning and enmity, which in its turn made them see demerits in Rama, and, as a form of vendetta, Rama was sent into exile besides being deprived of the throne.

Most people do not understand to what serious consequences this habit of guessing leads. They have never thought that spotting others' defects takes such a frightening form. In the above case, it had broken

to pieces the whole household and caused the commission of a great sin in sending Rama into exile.

Even Rama, whom people of today even regard as a very high soul, was lowered in the eyes of Kaikeyi because Manthra took it into her head to spot defects in him and took too much for granted. Whether what is narrated in Ramayana is a historical fact or not, we are only trying to bring home its spiritual significance. Millions of such cases are to be met with these days.

Before we explain how one should eradicate this bad habit, one should know of two more dreadful forms that this picture of faults or, in other words, the eye for faults, takes in the sphere of spiritual knowledge.

Decline in one's own spiritual efforts

One of these is that, indulging in this vice of looking into other's demerits, plants in us these very defects after some time, and makes us despair of life. Instead of directing our spiritual efforts on the right lines, we engage ourselves in watching others' black spots and have to face frustration when we find our own spiritual efforts declining in intensity and speed. In the beginning, man has hopes of earning purity and deity-status and, therefore, works enthusiastically and comes off with flying colours in a good many battle with Evil. But, during the course of his spiritual journey, his intellect unluckily takes a wrong path and, on account of his own fault, he loses his candidature for the divine world. He, who is not a candidate for any examination, cannot take it. The question of his passing it and attaining a high position does not arise. Thus, he will discover many faults in himself and say to himself, "I am not the one to improve. It is no use making efforts to imbibe this knowledge and to make this divine endeavour. I shall be right where I used to be. I shall sink or swim with the rest, and, so, I don't worry."

The other aspect of this bad habit can be seen when a man sees defects in anyone and, in his annoyance, begins to reproach him saying, "I shall set him right. Fie on him ! He is misguided." In fact, he ought to realise and say to himself, "I too am misguided, because I see only the bad side of him. Who am I to set him right? *Dharmrāja*¹ will ask me to account for my actions, because quarrelling with or scolding others is to take the law into one's own hand. To punish the sinful is the work of the courts." But instead of addressing himself thus, he, the fault-finder, scolds others.

1. The Divine Adjudicator.

Even illiterate people have sense enough to report crime to the government. Either they lodge a report with the police or approach the court. And, if anyone took the law into his own hands, he also would be committing a crime.

How to eradicate this bad habit?

In the foregoing pages, it has been explained how by giving in to the habit of fault-finding, man forgets divine laws and high traditions. On account of severance from God, becomes spiritually orphaned and suffers a great moral loss. Now we will discuss the methods which help the acquirement of the disposition to learn from others' examples:—

Let us be worthy sons of God, the Holiest Father

Firstly, man should never lose sight of the fact that he is a child of *Ishvara*¹. Just as a young one, belonging to the royal family, remembers that he has to learn royal habits and have royal propensities, even so, man devotes his attention to learning divine virtues provided he remembers that he is a child of God. Effort is there only when the need is recognised and full attention is given to it. So, as soon as you wake up, and before you get out of bed and place your feet on the earth, even before looking around, i.e. first of all, you should awaken in you the memory that you are a child of God. Early in the morning, when everything is rejuvenating, and the mind is fresh in the pure atmosphere around you, sowing the seed of this elevating feeling in this heavenly hour ensures its continuance for the whole day. At different times, now and then, you should refresh this heavenly hour ensures its continuance for the whole day. At different times, now and then, you should refresh this blessed feeling that you are God's child, thinking of Him with love and zest. In your inmost being, you will receive impulses to make you divinely virtuous. All love God because He is the ocean of love, peace and mercy. He is the most magnanimous; beneficent and kind and ever-forgiving. Hence, you, His child, have to become the very image of your Father by loving all and by living a peaceful, large-hearted and highly liberal life.

He prayeth best who loveth best,
All men both great and small,
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He created and loveth all.

1. God.

God attracts us because He is the model of Love and Wisdom and so is loved by all. Wonderful and unsurpassed! You have to be an image of wisdom, love and divine virtues.

Attention and checking

Secondly, man must remember that his aim is to be, like Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana, equipped with all virtues to the highest point possible, and not a degree or a fraction of a degree less than the maximum. The greater the number of virtues, the nearer he reaches the goal. Just as anyone looks into a mirror to see that he has done his hair well, his face is clean and every thing about him is spick and span, so should we have bathed ourselves with the waters of wisdom, look into ourselves to see if we have properly equipped ourselves with the qualities required to take us through the day's routine. Even in the sight that a fashionable man presents when taking out a miniature mirror to ensure a very neat look, we should find a reminder that we too, as souls, are becoming bright and clean, in fact truly fashionable like Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana. So, we should, more than once, *check ourselves* every day to make sure that each one of us has come duly to possess each one of the virtues, unscathed by the storms, engineered by Evil.

If at all these have impaired our virtues in any manner during the course of our activities, we should wash our souls with *Gyān* (applying the idea of our aim as a cleanser even as soap and water are used to clean the face), *attend* to the virtues and apply points of Divine Knowledge to remove blocks, as a comb is drawn through the hair, and see them well set. In addition to keeping in view our divine ancestry and membership of the deity family, or, in other words, the qualities that mark God's children and Vishnu's family, we should remember the family of Brahmins¹, originating in Brahma by virtue of *Gyān*—Divine Knowledge. We should not forget the quality that Brahmins have and the divine laws and code they follow. Applying the *Tilak*—Sacred mark—to the forehead is a symbol of soul-consciousness, the tuft of hair on top² reminds Brahmins of their high state, using their speech to discourse on divine wisdom, and doing other allied actions—all these are the marks of Brahmins. We should do good to people and do the right kind of service to them. All this we will care for love when we remember that the present time is that of

1. 'Brahmin' here means the God-children of Brahma who take divine knowledge, practise Raja Yoga and take to holy ways. It does not refer to any caste on the basis of birth.

2. Choti or tuft of hair at the top of the head

*Sangam Yuga*¹. It is in this very *yuga* that *Sanskāras* and inclinations of the three relationships, mentioned above, are implanted. Thus, by remembering this auspicious period when souls are uplifted, you will realise that you are of the family of God, the Highest of the line of Brahmins and then of Vishnu. You will be safe from any infection of the marks of the class of devils and degenerate men.

In order to accomplish this divine task of spiritual improvement and to check yourself as often as you can and to remind yourself of your obligations, you should wear a badge and also have some pithy, spiritual mottos hung up in your house. Ask yourself frequently enough the following questions to refresh your memory of divine relationship.

- (1) Do you remember Shiva Baba and God's inheritance of Deity world's sovereignty?
- (2) Do you remember your life's aim of attaining to the deity status, i.e. the status as of Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana?
- (3) Do you remember that you are at present in *Purushottam Sangam yuga*, i.e., in the Confluence of the end of Iron Age and the beginning of Golden Age?
- (4) Do you have God's spiritual family in mind?
- (5) Do you remember that you have to make efforts?
- (6) Do you remember the course that action takes from its inception to its final result?
- (7) Are you marching on the path of God's Remembrance?

If we ourselves refresh our memory of these points, we shall naturally acquire divine virtues, and our outlook will become viceless. Godly remembrance is like an injection of divine virtues in the soul. Remembrance of the Auspicious Confluence Period will stimulate the eviction of inauspicious ways to make for an excellent life. Remembrance of God's inheritance, which denotes sovereignty in heaven, will facilitate the induction of propensities suited to a royal and divine family and will render effort interesting. The idea of the family of Brahmins will remind you of your studentship and moral duties and ethical obligations in order to make for a virtuous life.

The point specially to note is that we have to search for virtues in the right places as customers seek rare and precious commodities. In the market, we see that, in the shop-windows, articles are exposed for sale while shopping of a large variety of articles is going on inside. Show-cases are of full of high-class goods. Someone asks for goods of quality or rare

1. Confluence Age.

goods and he would leave the shop rather than buy a low-grade thing. Others there are who go in for cheap or artificial or adulterated things and ask the shopkeeper if he has not got second-grade articles, telling him that they do not want high standard in these matters. We have, therefore, to look inside of us to determine whether we want high-grade articles and where we are seeking for these. In the world market, we meet people of three different kinds—the righteous,¹ the intermediate² and the unrighteous.³ Habits, view-points and conduct may be either divine or human; people of the latter variety, now-a-days, lean towards the satanic. We have to ask ourselves what we really want. If we are really good customers, seeking for good qualities, we shall get these in the market of the world. We want high quality, not tinsel. If we want the highest quality, which resides in righteousness and whatever is divine, we should be prepared to pay for it in the form of effort. We shall buy it, and make it our own, setting aside what we do not want. We should, therefore, engrave it indelibly upon our minds that we are customers of those very virtues which were possessed by predominantly divine deities, i.e. by Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana, or which are to be found in Brahmans in *Sangam yuga*, i.e. in the spiritual family of God. The rest is all bunkum. Thus, we shall be rid of the vice of fault-finding. That means we shall, even when we observe faults anywhere, not be the buyers of these but shall seek for divine virtues, for which we shall offer our efforts as the price.

What to do when someone reports to us about another?

Now one may ask: "Should we not listen to what we are told against anyone? Should we shut our ears even if that report is based on facts? Some reporters would easily fly into a rage if we didn't listen to them". Others may ask: "If we notice a fault in anyone, should we keep it to ourselves? Would this be called backbiting if we told others about this?"

We have already once touched this question. If anybody talks slander, you should, after having heard him, put him wise. If you do not possess enough strength of Divine Knowledge and yoga and, if the report begins to appear to you to be based on facts—whether the facts are really there or not, is a different question—and disturbs your soul, you should not lend your ear to it. You should ask the reporter to go up to the person concerned and inform him or speak about it to senior sisters and brothers, as, you should tell him, it does not lie in your hands to handle this matter.

If anyone's faults are recounted to you, you should, first of all, determine the mood and aim of the speaker. Is he doing so out of envy or malice or anger or because he has fallen out with that person and speaks

bitterly with a weary face and his feelings are hurt? Is he reporting, complaining or backbiting, or is he calm like a mental, a well-wisher of his, whose mistakes, defects or evil propensities he wants to eradicate to put him on the right track? You will thus determine the true position of the affair to find if it is calumny or a sincere desire to mend him. If the conclusion is that reform is what is meant, you should hear the reporter and, considering the occasion and the situation of the person concerned, offer him suggestions constantly with his capabilities of carrying them out. Otherwise, you shouldn't listen to the report and, even when he perseveres, be inattentive to it, and, in no case, allow it to occupy your thoughts.

The answer to the other question is also there in what I have said above. The central point to remember is that we should, as *well-wishers*, *tell gently*, on a suitable occasion, to any individual about his *faults*.

MORALITY AND THE GOAL OF LIFE

NOW-a-days, man, who is up to his ears in his business, does not know what the ultimate object of his action is. The whole of his life is full of engagements but he has no clear or complete idea of what the aim of life is. Since he does not know what his aim, his goal or his destination is, he does not have the desired capacity or speed to move onwards to it. Very often, he is faced with situations as render it impossible for him to judge what is right and what is wrong or what he should do and what he should not do. If he had a clear idea of his aim, he could easily judge for himself to find out whether a particular act he is contemplating will fulfil his aim or not, i.e. take him nearer his goal or not or it will be right or not.

You might question a few of your acquaintances about what the aim of their life is. In more cases than most, the reply would be that the aim is to become a doctor, professor, engineer, advocate, tradesman or industrialist. They do not know that these professions are but different *means* of making one's living and are not the *aim*. These are means of making money; they do not indicate a life of fulfilment. They just enable us to feed ourselves but the word 'man' does not stand for this alone. Man has to work in order to meet his needs, but, one has not to forget that, besides money, there are health, domestic happiness, mental peace, freedom of judgment, etc. which are desired by him. Hence it is betraying one's own ignorance to regard one's job or one's trade as one's ultimate aim or the object of one's life.

Attainment of complete Peace and Happiness is our aim

All thinking men will say that full and lasting peace and happiness are aimed at by every human being. In fact, all living beings strive, each one in his own way, to achieve this aim. Man's all efforts are directed toward this end. So far so good. But, what is meant by "complete peace and complete prosperity?" We ought to possess clear understanding of this point. Has there existed anyone in the past, in whose life there were peace and happiness, complete in all forms and constantly present? Who are those people? When did they exist? If we think that our aim is to have permanent peace and happiness, we

should have before us a clear glimpse, if not the whole picture, of this kind of life so that we have their achievements as examples for us.

Mergence of the soul into the Supreme is Impossible

Some religious-minded people might say that man's final aim is to obtain *Moksha* by which they mean the mergence of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. These people do not know the truth that the soul is an individual entity which is eternal and immortal, and, therefore, it cannot be, by any stretch of imagination, absorbed by the Supreme Soul. In other words, this entity cannot put an end to itself by merging into and losing itself in another entity. In short, it is wrong to have *Moksha*, in the aforesaid sense, as the ultimate goal.

Let us consider the difference between 'achievement' and 'merger'. The word 'achievement' can be used when a person gets some experiences and earns something while maintaining one's individual entity and retaining one's real existence whereas 'merger' would simply end all individuality, in which case there would not be what is meant by 'achievement' or 'fruition'. Hence, the notion of merger is a figment of imagination and is unnatural to the very nature of soul. If merger were inevitable or aimed at, there was no point in coming from Him. The truth is that, from times beyond memory, souls, have carried with them their individual latencies and, owing to difference of these latencies, souls shall, as before, remain discrete from one another. Ever since the souls existed, their entities have been separate and will be so for ever. What an infinite variety of *Sanskāras*, latencies or deserts these souls have ! How can their identity be sunk in the Supreme Soul and how can they be regarded to have emanated from Him who is changeless?

Liberation or Beatitude?

Let us now consider the question of salvation or *Mukti*. In salvation, there is cessation of activity, but no fruition or Beatitude. There is peace but no heavenly happiness. But, the soul does not only seek salvation (*Mukti*) but fruition (*Jeewan Mukti*) also. Hence, to hold up only salvation as one's aim is to hold on to only one-half of the whole.

To what height can a human soul rise?

There are some who hold that the aim is that the soul should evolve and grow to be the Supreme Soul. This is a wrong view. Why? Because He is one ever-complete whereas, as we find so clearly in our daily life, souls are many in number and limited in knowledge and virtue.

To aim at becoming the Supreme Soul presupposes that we were supreme at some point of time in the past and are not so at present and, therefore, now desire to extricate ourselves from the abyss we have fallen into and then return to our former state. This too is a wrong view, because God, who is *perfect*, will never have a fall. Never does He forget or lose His state, by reason of His being the 'Supreme Soul' which name He bears because of His perfection, omnipotence and omniscience. Because He has those qualities, never does He go into a state of forgetfulness or fall. As a result of his own improvement, man becomes high-souled (*Mahdtma*), he can become a deity¹ (*Devatā*), but never can he become, nor should he think of becoming, the Supreme. He can become great but never can he rise to be God or *Bhagwān*.

What then is proved to be man's aim in life? It is that man should attain to a status like that possessed by Shri Narayana² and woman should have a status similar to Shri Lakshmi's.³

Shri Nārāyana and Shri Lakshmi led completely happy lives, full of peace and, in their times, all people were holy in their ways and possessed of all-round prosperity. Achieving the same kind of life, that they had, should be the ultimate goal of man's efforts. At present, man has lost almost all that there once was of purity, peace and prosperity. And, therefore, it is here and now that our ideal should be the deity status, the status of Shri Narayana, the state of beatitude, of the maximum of purity, peace and happiness. The Supreme Soul is at present delineating, for our welfare, the lines on which we should work to be elevated from mere men to the status of deities. He, whose effort is guided by this aim, will surely and automatically, as it were, attain Salvation, Redemption or Liberation (Mukti) enroute to Fruition. His actions will have the necessary moral sanction.

1. god but not God. 2. Deity per Excellence. 3. goddess par excellence.

SOBRIETY AND SERENITY

ONE should be sobre and serious¹ in one's dealings. Let us suppose that there is a dispute with one's partners or one has noticed corruption, unfriendliness or harshness in one's office-colleagues or there is a defect in one's domestic affairs. One might think that Sobriety and Seriousness, under these circumstances, mean finding fault with the colleagues, scolding the children, showing one's displeasure to others, asserting one's own superiority over one's partner, noting others' defects and reminding people of their past misdeeds. No, that is not what we mean by Sobriety and Seriousness.

On the contrary, a sobre individual does not, all at once, offer a correction or administer a rebuke, but only when others ask for a solution or a correction, or when circumstances warrant, does he offer them his own correction as one would offer a pearl. And, in doing so, he deals with them as a brother soul, with humility, sweetness and without any undertone of harshness, without imperiousness, and without losing his own spiritual sense. Even when he is blamed or treated angrily, a person who has sobriety, does not show any haste in replying. What we mean by Sobriety is that the man, who has it, is not light-hearted or frivolous because he remembers that he belongs to God's family which is the best family. He hopes to become divine and, therefore, possesses royal manners, which means the assemblage of all high and noble virtues. When the mistakes of anyone are brought to his notice, he does not become annoyed nor does he treat him with displeasure; at least anger is not seen on his face. He does not rebuke the defaulter often or in the presence of others, but, *till the right time comes* to offer him corrections, he does not give expression to his feelings. Until then, he behaves as if nothing has happened. Even when the said time comes, he tells him what his fault was—all this in perfect sweetness, with sympathetic understanding and with an eye to reforming him thereby. Soon after this, he is as deep as an ocean.

1. The word 'serious' here has been used to mean that one should be sobre, contemplative, inward-looking also have a sense of duty and responsibility.

He is not in a hurry to express himself nor does he show curiosity or anxiety, but says things after having weighed all the aspects duly. Thus, his words have an added significance. While others would talk without being asked, he does so when he is asked to give his views. Thus, he is not over-enthusiastic to give his views and, so, he does not come into conflict with others, and there is very little scope for displeasure or friction. Thus, it is clear that Sobriety and Seriousness are qualities by means of which man is grounded well in inwardliness.

If you treat your children with levity or criticise them at every step or threaten them, they will become all the more uproarious. But if you are serene, i.e. sobre in dealing with them, they will respect you all the more.

Hence, this virtue is of a far-reaching importance. In every word of a sobre or serene person, there is a significance and a truth ingrained. You have observed that a banana tree has layers of leaves to its trunk, and so has the flower of this tree. The sobre man speaks after deliberation and, hence, what he says is significant. The following saying epitomises this discussion : "Just as there are several layers of leaves in a banana tree, so are there layers of truth, one under another, in a wise and sobre man's words."¹ Perhaps that is why the banana is an article used in worship, and its leaves and branches are put up on doorways on auspicious occasions.

Serenity or *Gambhirta* is good as it is a symbol of divinity. Yes, this is truly so, because a sobre man maintains poise. All the same, one would like to know why people take a serious and contemplative person to be dry as dust.

In answer to this, we must point out that the possession of these two virtues by man does not mean that he should be dry, uninteresting or unlively. He who has an unsmiling face and does not delight others with interesting talk is considered unattractive, if not ugly.

Seriousness does not and, in fact it should not, remind one of a hermit under a vow of silence, but of him who associates with, talks to, or entertains others as a wise man should, in accordance with divine ways. In other words, there is in him what is called dignity of a sort as there is in the members of a royal family. He, whose dealings are correct and noble, is always sobre and serene. A person of the opposite type would be but a tale-bearer; he would tell others indiscreetly what

2. जस केले के पात पात में पात,
तस ज्ञानी की बात बात में बात।

pertains to even his household affairs, try to anticipate others by replying before the other says anything and, more often than not, give cause for quarrel. The truth is that such a one is not inward-looking, whereas the contemplative individual will retain as if in a bank-locker, what he has been told. The former would babble, saying to the listener all along : "I am telling this to you only. Do not, at any cost, tell it to others, I adjure you". Thus, among certain people, owing to the tale-bearer's exploits, there are lurking secret animosities, the obvious result being less of equipoise.

To sum up, sobriety or serenity means weighing the *pros* and *cons* of every matter that comes in hand, and expressing your views only after having understood it, though it does never mean keeping complete silence. Also, it does not mean discarding all cheerfulness and entertainments. It means that our diversions, leading usually to absorption in the externals, should, in our case, not land us in body-consciousness, away from the ecstatic spiritual state. Serenity should be accompanied by tolerance and sweetness. It should have a pitch of humour.

HAPPY AND ECSTASIC MOOD

THERE is no person in this world who, at some given point of time, has no mood at all. The mood of a non-yogi is generally determined by two factors, the external stimulus or the worldly situation and his previous tendencies or outlook. Thus, the mood of a common person changes many times a day with the change in situation. If there is some good news, man is in a happy mood. If he suffers some loss, he feels sorrowful. Thus, his mood is not constant.

Negative moods affect health and atmosphere

Now it has been found that the negative moods not only cause uneasiness or peacelessness to the person but they also affect his health and disturb the atmosphere around him. For, they set into action some vibrations.. Take for example the case of a person who, one early morning, seems to be in a tense mood. The reasons in his case might be that, on the previous day, his boss in the office had a harsh word with him. Now his tension and irritability are evident from his face so that the vibrations set afloat by him make others also nervous and cautious, hesitant and tense. If now his wife asks her son to take a cup of tea to his father, he is reluctant to go near him. The whole atmosphere in the home is then charged with gloom.

From this ordinary example, it is clear that certain moods do not only disturb one who bears them, but also affect his colleagues, his friends, members of the society at large, even the whole world, though in an imperceptible way. There is need, therefore, of knowing that art which enables one to keep happy always and in positive moods.

The art of yoga enables one to achieve this object. Happiness, which is not a marketable commodity, or some kind of object which can be bought by money, can be easily attained by yoga. This art of controlling the moods is known, in yoga terminology, as the control over the various modes¹ of mind. Before one can have a calm, undisturbed and blissful mood under all situations, one must know the basis of the method of yoga.

1. बुद्धि ।

Thoughts make the mood and mood mints thoughts

It has to be noted that the method or practice of yoga is based on positive thoughts which give noble sentiments and a happy mood. The saying goes: 'As you think, so shall you become'. If, for instance, a man thinks that he is weak, his lack of confidence in himself, makes him tremble in the face of a difficult situation. Experiments performed by psychologists bear witness to this truth that, if a person thinks that he is losing his health, he definitely loses it to an extent, though it be perceptible after some time. So, this gives the clue to what method one should adopt in order to have the right types of moods, namely that one has to change the thoughts from negative to positive thoughts. This is exactly what a Rajayogi does. His positive thoughts are the thoughts connected with one or the other positive virtues of God or positive goodness of the world, or the hopes about the future. This can be illustrated by the following example.

Suppose a person feels nervous in some situations because he thinks that he is unequal to his difficulties, and has no one to help him or sympathise with him, or co-operate with him. Now, this feeling fritters away his thought-power all the more and distracts his attention away from the problem, so that, even before he gives a good fight to the problem, he has surrendered his arms completely and, thus, denied to himself even a trial or a chance.

The way of a yogi is however different. He has the firm faith that God is his infallible companion and his unfailing helpmate, and, since God is Almighty and Invincible, he believes that even the remote question of his getting defeated does not arise. Now, this faith works like many horse-powers of energy. He is able to push his cause and put his maximum strength, with all the will-power and concentration at his command. It has been found that, in many cases, he succeeds.

Someone may say that this kind of thought is merely hypothetical, for there have been events in history, where people fully relied on the help of God, but it did not come. In reference to this, it must be pointed out, that it would be a folly on the part of man to remain inactive, or to act half-heartedly. Therefore, it has been truly said that God helps those who help themselves. Since a man acquires faith by relying on God's help, this enables him to help himself, and, therefore, God also comes to his help.

This is not to deny that, in certain cases, a man of God, i.e. a yogi, faces failures, but it has been found that either those are reversed in the long run, or that they come to him in the form of blessing in disguise. If at

all they cause any harm to him, as a result of his past *karmic* debts, his faith in God's companionship gives to him the inner strength to withstand that harm easily, and without any feeling of unhappiness. It has been found that there are many many moods a man feels subjugated to, but a yogi lives only a few of them. The thoughts that a yogi has, and meditates on, in his mind, are positive. By these thoughts, he feels joyous, relaxed and introvert and acts with equanimity, confidence and tranquility and does not lose his humour.

The thoughts that give divine happiness

A man who attains God's Knowledge does constantly enjoy supersensuous happiness. Even though monetarily poor, he is a king in his own right ruling his mind and his physical organs, and free of all worries and wanting nothing. Even the biggest estates on earth are, unto his ecstatic state of mind, mere trifle. He is drunk in the divine nectar of Godly knowledge and has, therefore, a peculiar intoxication of his own. He is above all worldly pride but, being rich in gems and treasures of knowledge, he is a ruler in his own realm. The thoughts, full of Knowledge serve to him as great shock-absorbers in life and, so, his spirits are always high. He has his own meanings of events and words and is always a contented man. We will now give here a glimpse into his thoughts which make a man of knowledge always happy.

In fact, all the divine knowledge that God Shiva imparts, is conducive to happiness. But, first of all, we must have this clear in our mind that, out of the 500 crores of human beings, many are atheists and many lead a vicious life, and we are really lucky because we have faith in God and we have Him. We may be poor or worldly unwise but He, whom the whole world loves and worships, has picked us up! Isn't this a glorious thing? Surely, we have a bright future; our fortunes are growing in that He has taken us unto Himself out of billions of men and has placed, in our hands, His precious treasures of the gems of divine knowledge and, Omnipotent as He is, has undertaken to ferry across our boat that had been sinking with the weight of our sins or *Vikarmas*.

We are lucky because of God-union

The main thing to keep us infinitely happy is that we have found the Supreme Father, whom the devotees call their Master. Verily, we have got what was to be got and there is nothing more to seek.¹ By getting

¹. पाता था जो पा लिया और बाका रहा?

Him, we get into possession of everything and we should, therefore, be immeasurably happy. Acquisition and happiness go together. Acquisition of the supreme kind should raise our happiness to higher and higher levels day any night. Does not God re-make what has gone to pieces.¹ He is called the Remover of difficulties, trampling underneath all obstacles², the Helmsman or the Saviour of the Ship of Life,³ and the Giver of happiness.⁴ He is called by such other names also. So high is God, the Father-cum-Teacher-cum-Preceptor that the soul's happiness should be boundless. Anyone whose father is the ruler of a small town has reason to be happy. We can well imagine how very very happy we should be whose Soul-Father (God) is the King of kings and the Giver of deity-sovereignty to the rulers in Heaven. We are His adopted spiritual children i.e. His children by the links of *Dharma*.

If anyone, in ordinary life, gets a very able teacher or preceptor to guide him, he also thinks that he will become proficient, worthy and healthy and that fortune will smile on him. Now let us think of ourselves who have found Him, the all-seeing Supreme Soul and the Ocean of Knowledge who has come to teach us and to lead us, as a Preceptor, to the world of eternal peace. We, who have found Him, are bound to be highly prosperous. We will become all-seeing and the storehouse of divine knowledge, in the manner in which the son, as the child of his Father, becomes a Master. Haven't we acquired knowledge of all the three sequences of Time? We have become all-seeing because we have understood from the beginning to their end the ways of the world. How fortunate we are! This *Amrit* or Godly Knowledge we have got here will lead us to baptism in heaven of divine sovereignty.

We have brilliant Future and bright Present

It is a joy to think to how great we have become. By dint of the power there is in divine knowledge, yoga and purity, we are at present becoming master of our own mind and will, in future, become rulers in Heaven! That is why Shiva Baba asks us always to remember that we are highly fortunate because we are going to be masters in this world as well as in *Swarga*.

1. बिगड़ी को बनादे वाला ।

2. बिगड़-पिछाकार ।

3. जीवने-नाश का रोक्नेवाला ।

4. सुखदाता ।

Shiva Baba says to us, His children, "You are cultivating in yourselves purity and other divine virtues by means of yoga and divine knowledge (Gyān) and by doing service to others, by transmitting Gyān to them. As its reward, you will be worshipped in the form of shaligrams, i.e. in your incorporeal form as souls, and also in temples, as deities, by virtue of your having reached the status of worship-worthy deities like Shri Narayana. What a pleasure it is to you to find that, by acting upon this divine knowledge, you shall be doubly worshipped—as *Shaligrām* and as a deity." He further says, "I am worshipped only as incorporeal Shiva and as Master of the *Brahmand*¹, whereas you, because of your high spiritual endeavour, will be masters of *Brahamand*¹ and *Swarga*², and will be worshipped both in the incorporeal and the corporeal forms."

So, only when we remember our bright future and its noble fruit, our joy will be boundless, keeping us ever-happy. This our present life of endeavour is exalted and has elicited praise from all. During very many lives of ours in the past, we were devotees, singing the greatness of God, but now that He Himself has imparted the divine knowledge and instructed us in easy Raja yoga, He has raised us so high that He Himself is showering praise on us. He declares that we are highly fortunate, dear to Him as the light of His eyes,³ His beloved children⁴, the ornament of the family of true Brahmins⁵—ever-holding in our hands and ever-revolving in our minds the wheel of the world that reveals to us our self⁶ and, hence, He has to be here with us to give us deity-sovereignty. So, when God Himself grants us high titles while we are in the stage of making spiritual effort, we have reason to look forward to palmy days ahead provided we remember these titles.

We are the inheritors of the great Heritage of God

Besides, this, we have to remember that we are getting, from the Supreme Soul, incalculably great heritage of an extraordinary kind. In the present degraded world, there are numberless diseases, but in the

1. Soul World. 2. Heaven. 3. नूरे चश्म Shiva says this through the corporeal form of *Brahma*. 4. सिक्कीलधे वच्चे!

5. ब्राह्मण-कुल-भूषण god's children of *Brahma*.

6. स्वदर्शन-चक्रधारी One, who is equipped with divine knowledge of the self and the cycle of transmigration.

world to which God is taking us, there is never any disease, because the bodies we get there are as bright as of deities and are blooming with health. Here is premature death whereas there, where are deities only, they just cast off, without any regret, their mortal coil as one would put off one's clothes. Mental unrest, want of sufficient wealth, worry due to worldly relationships and excessive taxation are common features of today. Linguistic, religious and national differences, give rise to disputes in the present-day world. Famine, excessive rains or droughts, arson, floods and other Natural Calamities are sources of misery. But, in the Golden-age, called *Satyuga*, there is Purity, only one religion, one language, one sovereignty with *Prakriti* (Matter) serving as people's hand-maid, untold wealth to hand, lasting peace and prosperity to enjoy—all these are there, complete in all their various forms.

When we compare the great miseries inherent in the present-day vicious world with the great happiness that distinguishes the coming Golden-Aged viceless world, and when we keep in view that we are the spiritual children of the Supreme Soul, who is the Saviour of the fallen, and grants us complete peace and prosperity to last us for 21 lives, we will jump with joy and, suffused through and through with the love of God, will swing rhythmically to the tunes of transcendental happiness. Even a stone, if granted such high reward, will dance with joy. We are not so unlucky as not to be happy. Those in the ranks of *Māyā* are the really unlucky ones, who are even now in the clutches of vices and dead asleep in their ignorance, snoring while they sleep and sleeping while they snore. But, we have been awakened by Shiva Baba (God Shiva); we are deeply engaged in acquiring divine virtues to make good in life. In short, God has, with own hands, hallowed us with a guarantee of sovereignty in heaven. So, ecstasy is written deep in our faces.

We are Brahma's mouth-born or mind-born

O joy! that we have got it from Shiva, the Supreme Soul, who speaks through Brahma; Now that we have been divinely born from the mouth¹ of Brahmā; we have automatically become heirs to divine inheritance. God Himself has, through Brahmā, declared, "My Children, Salvation and Beatitude are your divine birth-right," those who become *Brahmans* in the real sense, i.e., who become holy through divine knowledge and do service to others by making them pure, rise to the status of deities. In what great estimation such *Brahmans* are held! Uptil today, among those of the *Sanatanist*² faith.

1. By listening to knowledge through Brahma's mouth

2. Ancient-most religion of India in its present changed form

all religious ceremonies have been performed through *Brahmans* without whose help no auspicious work is done. But the body-conscious, vicious men, who now call themselves *Brahmans*, though turned away from divine customs and traditions, are, on the basis of their descent from real *Brahmans* of ancient times, enjoying material prosperity, including respect. And, on the other hand, we who have become real *Brahmans*, should be filled with adequate zest and happiness because we have a really exalted role to play in the World Drama.

We have all things high!

Not only is our birth (because of God, the Supreme Soul) extraordinary but the time we are born has also been given high praise. Astrologers cast the nativity of a child after having known the time of its birth, and determine points accordingly. Our birth has taken place at a time which is called *Amrit Vela*,¹ *Brahma Muhurta*² or *Purushottam Sangam yuga*.³ All festivals are connected with this time. Hence, he who is regenerated, i.e. reborn, at this time and becomes God's own child, is definitely going to be exalted, as a result of this propitious birth to the rank of a deity, like Shri Narayana. Raj yoga practised now ensures high fortune. So, clearly our birth, the time of our birth, and our high spiritual efforts, our Father, Teacher and Preceptor being the Highest and the most powerful—all these connote that our fortune surely is very high. Isn't this a source of great ecstasy to us all? It certainly is.

Our ornaments or devices also are high. Shiva Baba has taught us: "My children, if you hold the self-revealing wheel of the world (*Swadarshan Chakra*), you will be a great emperor. Blow the conch of divine knowledge and you will rule over a nation of good souls. Holding the symbolic mace of knowledge in your hand, you will conquer *Mayā* and then be master of the world. Be pure like the lotus in this the remaining part of this last Cycle; you will become the King-consort of Lakshmi. I guarantee that I shall take you to the holy world. All these ornaments—the wheel, the mace, the conch and the lotus—are such that, in spite of us, they will take us to the garden of Paradise. Like Alauddin's Lamp of magic, these open the gates of *Swarga*. Those who hold these ornaments, will be wafted to heaven and enthroned there.

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1. The time when God delivers Nectar to the world.
 2. The period before dawn (here, the period before Golden Age).
 3. The Confluence Age when people divinise themselves.

How delightful all this is! Throughout the *Kalpa*,¹ we have to play important roles. In *Styauga*,² we are worshipful deities; in *Tretayuga*,³ we play praiseworthy roles, either as Chandravansi ruler of moon dynasty or happy denizens of heaven. It is we who lived in *Dwapur yuga*⁴ as devotees, dedicated solely to one God, and now when *Kaliyuga*⁵ is nearing its end, i.e. in *Sangam yuga*—the period of conjunction of Iron Age and Golden Age, we are here on the stage of the world as real and high *Brahmans*. We discharge our part in the present times in unison with God, the Supreme Soul, and also with important persons of the past. We are thus very fortunate. Famous Hollywood actors and actresses are not watched by so many as we are. They play but for a short time, whereas our part is extended for the whole period of one *Kalpa*. The time is not far off when all the 500 crores of human beings, inhabiting the world, will come to realise this extraordinary part of ours and will simply be astounded to learn about our conquest over *Māyā*.

Truly speaking, if we ruminate this knowledge or if we recapitulate it as above, we will be in full enjoyment of spiritual happiness and will feel that we are detached from the body and deeply absorbed in the ecstasy of divine knowledge. We will always be in a happy mood.

1. World Cycle (2) Golden Age (3) Silver Age (4) Copper Age
(5) Iron Age

DISSATISFACTION AND DISCONTENTMENT

AFTER I had addressed a gathering at a Godly Service-Centre in India on 'Contentment', besides other divine virtues, a man came to me and said, "Brother, may I tell you that I am a discontented man. One of the causes of my dissatisfaction is monetary difficulties. You are aware that prices are rising higher every day but my income cannot keep pace with the prices. I have, no doubt, the good desire sincerely to contribute to divine tasks, as much as I ought to but I do not succeed fully nor I can fulfil my needs in daily life, and, so, I cannot be contented in my present stage. How can one remain contented when one has to face, every day of his life, problems of this kind?"

I sympathised with him and said, "There is every likelihood that he who has all the means available for use, who has not to face any dire difficulty and has not run short at any point and who has not seen odd days, will feel contented though this may not always be true. But the question of acquiring this virtue arises only when one has to face unwanted situations. Why should you then say that it is not possible to be calm in these situations? It is when such situations arise that you have to exercise to acquire this virtue if it is not already there in you. This is within the range of possibility and, so, you are advised to try; otherwise, all endeavour would be futile if there were no possibility. Suppose one cannot have good income and cannot fulfil all needs of his life. Will discontentment mend matters?"

"No", said that man to me.

"Then why feel dissatisfied and why grumble? Remember, one who is habitually discontented, cannot have contentment. His wishes increase, taking various forms as days pass.¹ Should he continue dissatisfied, consumed by the fires of discontent and irritated beyond redemption?"

The man had a smile on his face. He appeared to be satisfied.

¹ अन्तर्गत विचारों का अन्तर्गत विचार ।

Discontentment disturbs balance of mind

Discontentment brings mental agitation and disturbs intellectual equipoise. As a result of this man is weighed down with despair, indifference, tension, animosity, even fury and mental agony and cannot exercise his discrimination in order to find means of improving the conditions and loses the ability to act. Thus, his plans and acts go wrong and give rise to quarrels. He builds castles in the air while he is as poor as poor can be. Only by dint of hard work can man make both ends meet and only the man of right understanding can work on the right lines. Otherwise, it is a blunder to let your reason be clouded by passion and thus lose your own happiness.

Contentment is wealth

Contentment is as good a means of happiness as wealth is considered to be. Is it proper, therefore, to lose the wealth of contentment in order to secure another kind of wealth? The right course of conduct is that man should be calm in the present crisis and, at the same time, find a systematic method of mending or ending it. Considering the present to be the consequence of our own actions, we should be careful about the future. Just as food sustains the body so does the mind find sustenance in happiness. So, the saying goes : there is no food as good as happiness.¹ And, to be happy you have to be contented. Just as, for bodily well-being, man seeks food, so should he maintain the state of contentment to ensure happiness of mind.

Remember the Law of Karma and the Law of Eternal Change

This world of ours is subject to change and every human being reaps as he sows. Hence man should discharge his part at the present time in a holy way and do good deeds so that he has not to face any undesirable situation later on. He should remember that change is bound to take place because the world cannot be the same every day or even every hour. Besides this, he should cogitate that, amassing much wealth entails struggle, obligations, bonds, show and maintenance and reciprocity which have the knack of expanding. He, who is thus engaged, is always busy employing his faculties to earn wealth, maintain and invest it and also spend part of it. He cannot get enough time to devote to meditation on God so that he might be in intellectual communion with Him for his lasting good.

God is the only support of the poor

We have not to lose sight of the fact that many wealthy people are visited by low engagements and longings and, having thus strayed away from God, roam in dream cars and in the land of vices. So, one should learn to realise that, owing to his want of riches, he has neither a mansion nor a car nor a factory nor any expanding area of tangled jobs. He should say to himself, "My mind is not dispersed over several things and, as I am not very rich, I have neither many friends nor many things to bank upon. It is a great convenience granted to me that I am willing to admit God to be my only support¹ and am ready to hand myself over to Him, the Supreme Soul. I am very lucky to have this opportunity of earning lasting good. Providence has already freed me from the pride of wealth, which is soon to be reduced to dust. I will be very prosperous in the coming Golden Age. The poor shall be raised up by God, the Merciful. Having found Him, the Giver of wealth, I have no reason to worry. Having held on to this virtue of contentment in those difficult situations of the present, I shall move on to the ever-happy New World of righteousness by virtue of accepting whatever comes my way and by happily singing praises of God.

The bigwigs, proud of their riches and turned away from God, shall leave behind all their riches. I am lucky, a million times more lucky than they, because I have become the child and heir of God, the immensely rich Father." By meditating thus will man attain this virtue and the happiness.

Discontentment because of Disease

Now one may ask, "All that you say is perfectly right. But, there is another difficulty. This body of ours is a source of worry. When anyone is suffering from chronic disease and does not get over it in spite of efforts, how can he be contented?"

Now, in answer to this, one should note that, if illness causes discontent, the body will be affected or overpowered all the more by this feeling, because mental worry surely influences the body. So, discontent has done harm rather than good. It shows want of wisdom to let both the mind and the body be unwell. Is not the mind unwell when it is not at ease, i.e. when it is not comfortably posited? The body's ailments have been already there since long, and it is unwise to allow the mind to receive the contagion. It will be merely a waste of time. Instead

1. एक बल, एक भरोसा ।

of this, one should tune one's mind on to God and fill it with the power that divine link gives and then fight the disease by this means also. Thus will enthusiasm grow and vitality and liveliness come.

Someone might say that he is helpless and that he has to be served by others because he is an invalid and that he is, therefore, not happy. But a man, placed as this invalid is, must know that he may continue to be attended upon by others, but should not be dissatisfied with oneself or with his attendants, as otherwise those latter will lose their mind and alacrity to work. They will say, "He is dissatisfied even though he receives due medical treatment and service." They will simply be less enthusiastic than before.

Think that the Disease has come to bid farewell

You will have hence to keep in mind as you have already learnt to believe that the present time is the Iron-age. Matter has also become *Tamo-guni'* and mind also has become unholy (being inclined to war and wickedness). The soul has still debts of old bad actions to pay. So, diseases will visit the body or come only to bid farewell to it. Is not a debtor, who is reported to be preparing to leave for other lands, visited by his creditors asking him to clear his debts before he leaves? Hence, it ought to be clear that one should not feel discontented but consider that all that is around him is soon to vanish. Only then will you come to have contentment.

1. Of the lowest grade.

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1. Of the lowest grade.

HUMILITY

ALL the divine virtues, singly and collectively, bring man nearer, and nearer to God, are conducive to the uplift of his soul, and are a source to joy to him who possesses them as well as to others who come in contact with him. On the same principle, unholy ways take man farther and farther away from God, lead him to decline and subject his mind to fluctuations besides causing pain to the world at large. Among the devilish qualities, self-conceit is such a gross form of body-consciousness that it is the most hostile to spiritual uplift. Among the divine qualities, humility, i.e. freedom from self-conceit, is such that it helps man in assimilating more and more of God's instructions, and saves him, who is rising from falling into the abyss of degradation. Hence a Gyāni, i.e. a man of knowledge must not be vain but humble.

A vain man loves flattery

A vain man would always show himself off as the highest and the wisest of all, and be easily amenable to flattery. Hence, the most trivial thing is a quite enough excuse for him to talk. He wants to show himself off. Before another man has had his say, he would start talking only to display his worth, and, being impatient to prove himself right, and, discarding sweets of inwardliness, he is earnestly watching what other say about him or whether they would ask him his views. Do they really hold his views weighty and accept them, or not? Do they understand him at all? Do they welcome him or not? Thus, he is miles away from being calm or inward-looking and he loses hold of the ways of those who are of noble and royal parentage, and under the influence of haughtiness, shows forth his thoughtlessness, narrowmindedness and his absorption in the world as he sees it around himself. He is surrounded by a ring of flatterers, and, thus, gets astranged from his real friends, sincere advisers and true well-wishers and leads life on the path of Darkness.

Pride gives rise to many bad qualities and to unhappiness

He, who is not humble, lacks tolerance and fortitude also, because a proud man cannot bear the sight of anyone rising higher than himself

and, therefore, is smitten with jealousy. Having thus lost the faculty of endurance, he utters distressing words. Whenever a vain man is not 'duly' respected, or, is not given a 'proper' welcome, or does not get all the privileges which he thinks are 'due to him, or is not asked for his 'valuable' views, he behaves like one who jumps down from the pedestal of tolerance and fortitude and stands like one shorn of glory. He does not think of what people will think of his strange behaviour. The paramount feeling in him is that he is not to be ignored, and that people should give him 'due' regard. This disease of egotism that controls his mind, diminishes the nutrition that these two qualities—Tolerance and Fortitude—or other divine qualities afford. He wouldn't rest till he has asserted himself, so that it may be rightly said that he is suffering from assertiveness because he has not the stamina to resist this emotional disease, called Egotism. Decidedly, such a one, who is smitten with pride, cannot have real happiness. A monkey, who is drunk and is bitten by a snake, jumps about and makes a hell of noise; so does he behave, who is tipsy with conceit or has been stung with it. In his bewilderment, he is restless and springs upon others to attack them.' If anyone suggests tolerance and fortitude, he is all a fire, saying in reply: "So you have come to advise. How can he then learn lesson of virtue? One who really attains divine knowledge, he alone has in him this valuable quality, called Humility.

It should be known very well that humility as also divine qualities are deep-rooted in him only who practises correctly the knowledge imparted by God, who is a true Rajyogi and who pays the fullest attention possible to acquirement of divine virtues. He who has divine knowledge, does not have in him the desire for vain-glory, display or of drawing peoples' attention to himself or of exercising authority over them.

How divine knowledge and Yoga enable us to eliminate Pride?

The very object of receiving knowledge is to know that we are a self-luminous point—a soul—a child of the Supreme Soul, and not at all a body. The essence of yoga is to settle it in the memory that we are a conscient, luminous points, a child of the effulgent and incorporeal Supreme Soul, who is free from vice and is the Ocean of peace and bliss. Gyān and Yoga, both of them, between themselves, eradicate pride which is born of the consciousness that you are a body. Similarly, by contemplation on divine knowledge, we have vision which tells us to become pure like angels who are in the Subtle World, while the principle of God's gifts makes us learn that we should accept whatever

we get as God-given fruit because we have surrendered to him all we thought we had.

If we live this knowledge in its true spirit, i.e. if we are of the firm faith what we are luminous points, called souls, and become true Rajyogis and understand contemplation rightly, we shall automatically learn to be humble. That we are points is enough to kill all egotism. This monster has no business to come near us because we have to become angels. When we have surrendered ourselves to God, and think that whatever we have, has come to us only as God's gift to be enjoyed divinely, there is nothing left to make us feel proud. Hence, only those who have superficial knowledge or who have fallen from the state of yoga in that they have forgotten the soul and live in the body, are subject to inroads of egotism.

Divine knowledge, properly assimilated, and yoga, rightly practised, frees man from pride and makes him humble. As this is really God's gift, there is no reason for man to be proud. We do not aim at earning degrees of such as that of '*Shastri*', '*Vyākaranāchārya*'², '*Nyāyāchārya*'³ and the like nor do we profess to be learned in the scriptures or be well-versed in erudite discourses or discussions where these '*Shāstrās*'⁴ are usually quoted. We know and admit that though we had read books, we were like the illiterate because, in spite of our knowledge of *Shāstrās*, read by us, or just heard from others, we did not have this, the highest knowledge, imparted to us by God. This knowledge, which we now have, has been given by Him through Prajapita Brahma and all for our welfare; why should we be proud, when we have got it from God as His gift, out of His compassion, and is, therefore, not our own? Usually, one boasts of what one call one's own. One should not be proud of what really belongs to others. Only a baby would pride itself on having a thing which had been gifted to it. We, on the contrary, believe that we did not know anything, that we were awakened by the merciful Supreme Soul from sleep and that we have yet to be fully divinised and, therefore, have to act up to what He tells us to do, as otherwise limited as our learning is, we might commit mistakes.

Above, it has been explained that when the foundations of knowledge are well-laid and when man is a true Raja Yogi, he will be meek. But a question may be asked: "How is it that body-consciousness is the cause of all kinds of pride?" For, what one generally notices is that

1. One learned in scriptures. 2. Authority on Grammar. 3. A Logician.
4. Scriptures.

pride, when founded on the consciousness of body, expresses itself in some such manner as, "I am older than Mr. so and so; I am father, husband or elder brother of such and such a person and, so, am more experienced, have seen more of life and, so, my word must be accepted." But we all know that, besides the consciousness of one's physical age, or bodily relationship, health or beauty, there is the pride no less of wealth, position, family, race or country. So, there arises the question: "How all these forms of pride are founded on body-consciousness?"

How is all kinds of Pride based on Body-Consciousness?

Let us first consider the pride of family, community and country. From the point of view of souls, we know that the family of all souls is only one, and is of God and, so, all souls are *brothers* to one another. The abode of all souls is *Paramdhām*,¹ also called *Brahmlōk* and they are of the race of the incorporeal beings, i.e. of points-of-light. On the contrary, when man regards himself as a physical body, up crops the feeling of pride that he is, from this bodily point of view, high-born, let us say, he is a member of a rich landowner's family, an inhabitant of a particular state, well-known for bravery, and belongs to high class, race or caste. If, on the other hand, he remembers that he is of God's family, and of the race of luminous points, a denizen of *Paramdhām*—which is the abode of peace—and is spiritually linked with every other soul, never will in him arise any feeling of self-conceit.

Similarly, pride of wealth and position, i.e. sense of personal glory and respectability are associated with our body. From the point of bodily work, a man may be a noted lawyer, another a doctor and a third a leader but, from the point-of-view of the soul, all are *brothers*. In this latter relationship, there is no question of pride of position. Wealth builds links with others in their worldly forms. After death, man ceases to be the master of wealth; when the soul was in *Paramdhām*, it had no wealth, because, there, all are as points, wealth there has no existence at all. Only when the soul takes on a body does there come necessity of wealth and prosperity or attachment to it. He, who considers himself a soul, a luminous point of peace and bliss and has abandoned love of wealth and the material world and known that he is returning Home,¹ cannot, have in him, any feeling of pride of wealth, worldly status, etc.

This is how one should understand and body-consciousness is the source of all mischief. Only when man makes the mistake of considering

1. World of Liberated Souls.

himself a material being instead of a soul, do unholy ways creep in. But when he firmly believes that he is a scion of God's family, a shining point dwelling in *Paramdhām*!, his habits undergo a transformation and the essence of divine virtues finds its way in him.

Can we do without exercising pride?

Finding it difficult to have meekness in day-to-day life, a man once asked me thus: "The world today is so made as to render it necessary to browbeat others. Daily routine cannot go on smoothly when we do not show that we have some powers and some authority. We have to use the weapons of rebuke, rebuff and reproach and have to talk as masters to overawe our children, our wives, our neighbours, our subordinates at office or a shop. All these lord it over us, are rude and, as it were, mount their verbal or behavioural attacks on us. Hence, they have to be held in check, and, in order to do so, we have to exercise superior influence or maintain a show of superior power. If we were simply meek, everyone would take us to be timid or weak-hearted. Have we, therefore, to do without exercising pride or mastery? Do these two indicated wickedness?"

A friend, accompanying him said, "This is what happens with us generally. Our superiors in office or those elder to us to bring into play their superiority. We do not like this perhaps because it hurts our feelings of pride. We have an opinion about ourselves, and, therefore, we hate those who deal with us from a superior position. If anybody ever took it into his head to overawe us, we would not at all be mild. So, what ought we to do in such situations?"

Do unto others as you wish to be done by them

I said to them: "When you do not tolerate the imperious behaviour of others, i.e. when you do not like the egotistical ways of others, you can easily understand why others, with whom you deal as with an inferior, or over whom you establish your superiority by lofty looks, do not like your attitude. Your ways of holding them or of impressing them with your high status can never be agreeable to them; can they be? There is no reason then for you to keep them under subjection, drunk as you would then be with the sense of your superiority. On the one hand, you say that, without adopting this attitude, things can't go on smoothly and on the other hand, you do not like yourself being overawed by thers; which of the two courses do you prefer?

Stiff-necked will be confronted by stiff-necked

"You are well aware", I told him that, now-a-days, no one can be held in awe, however much we might try to control him. Too much or improper exercise of control irritates people and he who tries to exercise this, loses respect quickly. This accounts for the establishment of trade and labour unions. If anybody treated them shiffly, he might succeed once or twice, but, the third time he would simply be 'gheraoed'¹ by them, his effigy would be burnt and agitation started against him. Similarly, if in a household, any individual overawes his juniors or always weilds authority over them, a time comes when they face him insolently, as they not only have lost all respect or love of him but begin to hate him. Hence, it is wrong to think that nothing can be got done without adopting a stiff-neck pose and without being tense, or that others don't abide by his wishes unless he makes a show of his superiority. The truth is that people are submissive to him who is humble, but no one is ready to obey him who is stiff-necked. In the physical world, there is an analogy to explain this point. The tree that is bent with fruit, affords shade, in which not only rich and respectable people but also poor labourers also wish to sit, whereas the tree that stands bolt upright, like the palm or the cane or the bamboo, does not give any shade and no one likes to sit near or under it. Bamboo is such a tree that no part of it is used in acts of worshipping deities; it is, perhaps, because it stands like a proud man.

On the other hand, people do him obeisance who bows before others. He who is conceited in his ways and tries to overawe others is a *persona non grata*. So, you can now decide what line one should adopt?"

"What do you do", I asked him, "when a friend of yours, younger than you, bows to you out of courtesy, or even touches your feet? You at once stoop a bit, hold his hand or lift him up with both your hands. If he did not bow to you, would you ever bend before him thus? I do not mean that one should bow thus but this makes it clear that, being humble towards others, is making them submissive to you. But even if, as a matter of custom, one knelt before him who is stiff-necked, one does not do so sincerely and with his heart and soul."

I explained this point further by citing the example of worship-worthy deities. "Now-a-days, people go to temples and kneel again and again before the images of Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayana," I told him,

1. Encircled by the agitators to overawe him.

“Whenever and wherever they notice an image of Shri Laskshmi and Shri Narayana, they bend on their knees there and then. Why? Because the devotees have, not only in one but several lives, they had in the cycle of time, knelt several times every day. And the reason thereof is that these deities, in their lives, previous to their reaching the present state, i.e. in *Sangam yuga*¹—the period of spiritual effort—had bowed to God and, consequently, millions of people every day in the course of their transmigrations in the cycle, kneel again and again before them and salute them. These deities had in, *Sangam yuga*, possessed the virtue of humility, which has brought its reward in the worship and respect they command now. Devotees touch their feet with both their hands and, placing their forehead on them, consider themselves lucky.”

“Hence,” I suggested to him, “frightening others, threatening them or flaunting your worldly position to keep them in awe is against the code of divine life. People spontaneously bow to him who is humble even though they be more worthy, skilled, and industrious.” “Our object”, I said “is not to humble anyone but to become worthy and, while doing our job without conceit, be humble still. When I do so, those below me or under me will see that though I am proficient and noble, I am not haughty and I mix with people and am meek to them.” They will say to themselves, ‘It bespeaks him greatness: we stand nowhere near him. He loves us and co-operates with us: he loves us so much that he wouldn’t let us use gestures of high regard for him. How noble he is. Verily an angel, a deity in man’s garb! We would sacrifice even our lives for him’.

Thus, love and humility are more dignified and divine way of dealing with people. Our life should, therefore, be so modelled that, out of love for us, and not because of fear of us, people work heart and soul while we, on our parts, should become worthy, and be able to teach others to work by ourselves turning out good amount of work. Then we would mark that it is not at all necessary to exercise authority over or instil awe into others. Not only this, we will find that a person older than us and higher in status will treat us with all humility because we have love and respect for him. If at any time, conceit comes into play and he talks to us improperly or in an unseemly manner, he will realise later on with regret that it was wrong of him to have talked thus to one who is a well-mannered, disciplined, sensible and good worker.

1. The conjunction of the tail-end of Iron Age and the start of Golden Age when spiritual efforts are sincerely made, to divinise the self under instructions from God directly:

Again, we find if anyone who has been elevated to a high rank, accepts the honour in such a way that he gets swollen with pride, people would, sooner than later, begin to say to one another that he has now become conceited and his downfall may be considered to have begun. On the contrary, if anyone does not accept the praise showered on him, by the public, he will be all the more popular and will be regarded as noble and above any feeling of pride in spite of the elevated rank he has. Now it is easy for one to say who is better: the proud personage who gets estranged and is offered hollow praise or he who is really loved? Should our relations be based on love and mutual regard or on bossism, on lording over others and on expectations of high praise and mute obedience?"

"On humility and love", the two men agreed.

One who has humility, has no fear

Humility has another important advantage. One, whose actions are not tainted with pride, has never any occasion to be grieved or to say with regret that he has not been treated by so and so properly. He does not have fears that what he has said may produce bad results. On the contrary, he whose behaviour is arrogant, has in his heart the growing feeling that he cannot be sure of what his talk may result in. Thus, one should understand that a proud man is not respected, that his mind is assailed with fears and that the house he lives in, goes to pieces because, among the members of his household, there is no mutual love and, being extremely tense with each other, they leave the house. Hence, one should put in one's best efforts to acquire the virtue of freedom from pride, for pride is a grievous defect. It is wrong to believe that worldly people ought to go about their job with a show of their status and glory and exercise authority, for pride goeth before a fall.

No engrossment in and identification with acts

Shiva Baba does not ask one to abandon one's status or its appurtenances? What he means is that one should find repose in the intrinsic status of souls, that is, one should live the faith that souls are children of the Almighty Supreme Soul, the Master of the Three Worlds. Even while resting in the contemplation of that basic position, one has not to ignore one's duties in the world, which is like a Drama in which each soul has to play its part, without getting egotistical about it. For instance, an actor is asked to play the part of a *Rājā*—a king. He will, therefore, act the part on the stage as a king though, in actual life, he is not a king. In any case, he will remember either consciously or sub-

consciously that he is in reality not *Rājā*, but a Mr. so and so, and that he is here on the stage for only a while, acting a given role. If he ever believed himself to be a *Rājā* and behaved as such with everyone he met, none will take him as such. His strange behaviour would puzzle every on-looker. The truth, likewise, is that we are souls; we have come from *Paramdhām* and, being clothed individually in physical bodies, like actors in their respective costumes, say, of a lawyer, doctor, judge, etc., act our appointed parts. While we do so, we should note, all along, that we are souls and, therefore, separate from the actors and their play. We shall earn release from egotism only when we rest in this incorporeal state of the soul, or at least remember it always. Otherwise, we cannot overcome egotism.

Other practical situations

Unfortunately, man is busy, whole day, earning and laying by money. He who has enough wealth or earns a lot is, in a smaller or greater degree, in high skies due to his being wealthy. Such a man talks egotistically so that we fear hurt and this gives rise to pride in us. Again, when we accost a person, we call out Thakurji! Sharmaji! Chatterjee Sahib! Kriplani Sahib or Mr. Menon! as the case be. Thus, the tradition is to call people by their surnames which are the castes or sub-castes, based on one's bodily descent. This, generally, makes the very start of a talk to be based on body-consciousness. Furthermore, while introducing our friends, we say, "He is a landlord, whose father was governor or well-known political leader, or a writer. So, in a world, ruled by customs, man has, to some extent, the pride either of wealth or respectable family or any other worldly thing. The question, therefore, is how should one continue in one's basic spiritual state even while doing one's jobs as a member of the society, particularly on occasions like these.

In answer to this question, we should note in the first instance that, if a man, who has acquired God's knowledge and is engaged in spiritual communication with God, becomes subject to egotism in these situations or in society, he has not really attained anything from *Gyān* or yoga. A man of knowledge cannot then be distinguished from an ignorant one. Knowing that, in the present Iron-aged world, wealth or money change hands quickly and both are lost easily, a *Gyāni* has no reason to be proud. A wealthy man of today becomes a pauper tomorrow if his shop unfortunately catches fire. Today, a millionaire, tomorrow a bankrupt—this is the way of the world. Death stops the egress or ingress of wealth. Or, an accident disables a man, however wealthy he be, and hurls him into a state of distress. Why then be

proud of one's possessions? Man should make use of his wealth and use it properly, without being swayed by considerations of a purely material kind. He may be proud if at all he and his wealth remain together for ever, i.e. if it is sure that he is not to die. Now that a very dreadful time is coming in this unrighteous world, where there will be destruction on such a scale that all the wealth, existing in it, will either lie buried¹, or go to the coffers of the Govt., or be stolen or just consumed by fire, pride is misplaced. Isn't it just stupid to bank upon what is perishable? Besides, the wealth of today is but trifling when compared with the unlimited treasures which we had in the Golden Age and the Silver Age. Even princes of today are but beggars. Thinking of our high status in the deity world, we are, today, lower than even the servants of those days.

Hence, a Gyāni should be modest in that, upto recent times, he belonged to a degenerate class, though he is now becoming righteous by degrees. The grandeur of man is as nothing when compared with the double-crowned deities of Godly Age. This comparison teaches us to be humble and to make endeavours to become deities in order to possess real and divine prestige and splendour—without any taint of conceit.

Practical Question

During our informal chats, one day, after a morning class at one of the Godly centres, one of our spiritual brothers asked me the following question: "It happens that someone may come forth and boastfully declare that he has accomplished a task, which, but for him, would have remained unfulfilled, though the truth is that I did the work, or, at least, contributed greatly to the fulfilment thereof. He does not make any mention of the part I played or, if at all he mentions it, his rendering is such as to manifest his desire or attempt to get himself the whole of the credit for it. Or, he may point out defects in my working instead of praising it. This low cunning of his exasperates me, and then I have a mind to come forward and explain my part, at least as accurately as I can, as a matter of duty to set my record straight and this lays him low. Is this act of mine to be called : 'self-praise'? I have a feeling that he wants to rise in the estimation of people at my cost. How can I remove this feeling?"

In a lighter vein, I said to him, "Well, dear, if you cast a light object

1. किसी की दबी रही धूल में, किसी की राजा छाय ।
किसी की चोर लूट गये, किसी की आग जलाय ।।

into the sea, that object will, for a few minutes, remain just below the surface on account of the force with which it is cast; but will not sink and reach the bottom. It will soon come up to the surface. Exactly in this manner, the truly humble and unmoved man, who is not affected by praise or dispraise but remains light in either case, will not sink low even if another person would wish him lowered. In what anyone says, conveys the impression that he himself did a lot while the other man did not do so much, this impression cannot last long. Others, who hear him, will conclude that he is just praising himself and grudges praise to him to whom it is due. They will also find that the other man's greatness consists in this that he does not feel want of praise but continues to be humble.

There is another point to consider. It does not, in fact, should not matter to you if he, who praises himself while lowering you in people's eyes, gets joy for sometime. You are thus the cause of his joy. Shouldn't you earn reward of a good act? You should look at the matter thus : "Sooner or later, the truth will be known and, so, there is no reason to be impatient of delay." You should not give the 'go by' to a noble virtue because he himself does not have it. So, you should renounce all desire for respect, and should rest in the enjoyment of a happy soul. If you adopt the code of service and humility, tolerance, cheerfulness and the like virtues will be acquired by you and you will have proper fruition, so greatly desired by all souls."

I do not know how deep was the effect this answer had on him though I noticed a glow on his face and a twinkle in his eyes and, a second later, I found that I was scheduled to leave for some service. I did not ask him about it the next time we met and, after that I dropped the idea of asking him whether what I had said had adequately answered his question; I thought it had now become an old matter.

TOLERANCE AND ENDURANCE

IF we do not tolerate and keep calm when someone denigrates us, we thereby allow entry of the feelings of envy, hatred or anger into ourselves. If we do not endure a painful situation, we become agitated. All these feelings—envy, anger, hatred, etc.—are included under the head of impurities or vices. Clearly enough, therefore, lack of tolerance generates vices whereas, tolerance improves our purity and conduct and increases our spiritual strength. Therefore, in Hindi, this quality is known as '*Sahan Sheeltā*, for it increases in us the power (to endure) as well as the mental purity (*Sheel*).

Besides, tolerance increases happiness. If you just keep calm when harsh words are directed to you, the dispute would be ended or its severity mitigated. Confusion is gone. The flames of anger are fanned by intolerance, landing man in more painful and more dreadful situations than before. If man bore illness calmly, at least those who attend to him will not only be saved of worry on his account but will be pleased with him. He will be praised by one and all. If anyone treated him badly, everybody will sympathise with him, the tolerant. He impresses all and is very happy because he knows he has not become passionate, displeased or discontented and has not shouted at or insulted anyone but is on good terms with them. Thus, it is an ennobling and endearing quality. In order to learn this major and important virtue, we should first know what are the qualities and characteristics of a tolerant person.

The Qualities of a Tolerant Person

If we carefully observe, we will notice that one of the qualities of a tolerant man is that if he is slandered or addressed curtly, he does not pull a long face. Not a trace of gloom appears in him. Even in situations, caused by defeat, grief, difficulty or clash of habits, what he says or does will not be touched with worry, nor will it ever convey to others any feelings of fright, gloom, anxiety, pain or confusion. From his eyes will shine forth the zest of divine knowledge. Never will there appear any sense of displeasure of ill-will, reebleness, loneliness or indifference. His

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demeanour will show that nothing very serious has taken place, that he is ready to face things as they come and that his endeavour is not diminished in any way. When faced with circumstances which would engender, in an ordinary man, the feelings of pain and unrest, he maintains stability. No current of sorrow should be there in his mind, for his mind is safe as in a fort. Nor is there any appreciable irritation in his attitude to others in the course of his spiritual endeavours or any diminution in his spiritual communion.

Evidently, it seems to be very difficult to endure things in such a manner that not even a trace of any feeling appears in our face. But, assuredly, one can become tolerant to this extent though one needs yoga and spiritual strength to have this quality to a high degree. The soul which has grown weak can now get the strength from the Almighty Father. For this, we should be attuned to Him. Also, we should note that we have given the go-by to the world around us and are now reborn spiritually.¹ Do the dead have any feelings? Do they hear what the survivors say for or against them? Hence, we should always remember that we have, as it were, departed mentally from this world of thorns and vices and are born in the deity world or in the Sangam yuga—the period when transition is taking place or when the old is giving place to new. If we follow this method then this quality will come easily.

Tolerance vis-a-vis self-respect

But the difficulty arises when one thinks of his prestige or position or feels that the quality, called Tolerance goes against one's sense of self-respect. For example, a person can say, "If anyone insults me in the presence of others, makes fun of me, slanders me or blames me I cannot bear this because, from his behaviour, it appears that he is inimical towards me or wants me to be lowered in other people's estimation or considers me to be a nincompoop. Since, I, like any other man have, should in fact have, the sense of self-respect, how can I put up one's disparaging remarks about me?"

Now, from the point of view of a man who is not interested in spiritual advancement, i.e. from the point of view of an ordinary Iron Age² man, what has been said above is true but the question is that if a wise man i.e. a Gyāni behaves like an unwise person or if one who believes that he belongs to God's family or divine lineage acts as has

¹ I have said that we have given up our old mental attitudes and ways and are now taking to holy path. We are no more our old selves but are reborn as spiritual beings.

² Iron Age is a metaphorical expression.

been suggested by the above questioner, it would be difficult to tell a good man from a bad one. If a soul is brought in contact with another soul by the bonds of its past actions, who else but he (the former) should endure its results? If one would not bear it now, one will have to do it when one is in *Dharamrājpurī*.¹ If one endures it now, one will surely get in future its reward in the form of holy and divine status. If one does not endure it, one foregoes that reward and that future status, because one has not truly acquired in full the divine virtue of tolerance.

Hence, if a man does not treat us well or speaks ill of us or talks harshly to us, we should say to ourselves, 'His harshness and slander are to us as so many flowers, because, by this means our *karmic* accounts with that soul are being squared up, while we are acquiring the precious virtue of tolerance in the bargain. By virtue of the divine quality, called tolerance, we shall become worship-worthy deities. The very person, who offers us words of abuse or slander as one would offer flowers, is, in a way, our devotee who will in *Dwapar yuga*—the Age of *Bhakti* cult—offer me flowers in worship." Shall I not have, by virtue of tolerance, become a deity then? Even today, we notice that those, who are the devotees of Vishnu and Shankara have, in their mythological books,—the Puranas recorded many slanderous things against these deities wittingly or unwittingly, and yet they read them again and again. Similarly, those who greet us with slander and brickbats to-day, will have to offer us adoration and bouquets later.

Again, it is a thought to think whether we should adopt bad ways simply because these persons, who have not only no divine knowledge but are slaves to vices, behave badly. We are fighting *Māyā*, which means vices; we are not fighting with any man whosoever. Our job is to frighten *Māyā* away from our presence and not to harbour any feelings of hate or bitterness and thus ourselves become slaves of *Māyā*. We are not followers of that vicious man and, so, we cannot adopt his bad ways. Hence, it is clear that he, who applies a brake upon evil feelings by dint of divine knowledge and yoga, will never be sad, but will bear cheerfully all situations, as otherwise he will only spoil his luck.

Shouldn't we explain our position?

Once, when I was informally addressing a small gathering on the value of tolerance, a person in that group, said, "But I have observed that, if the slanderer does not get a sharp rejoinder, it will be held by

1. The Region of the Divine Adjudicator.

those present there that the man listening silently to that slander is in fault. The times are such that silence or tolerance is misunderstood."

Let us accept that this person was right, for there is no doubt that the world is such. But, I ask: "If passions are aroused or there is a tumult, who is going to listen properly to the man being slandered? No one will value properly and dispassionately what one says at that moment. Therefore, isn't it better to have some patience and wait for the right moment?"

And, so, I told this man: "I do not mean to say that you should not place your side of the case before them but that you should seriously and calmly and with tolerance tell them, "Brother, you may say what you want to, but keep the atmosphere from becoming wild, and then let me tell you my views also. Are we not brothers all, children of one and the same Father, having one common aim, and all hailing from the same place and bound for it now? Should not we, therefore, follow the spiritual rule of purity and peace and co-operate with one another? Having thus prepared the ground, you may tell them your view-point. Otherwise, if, they are not prepared to hear you, why should you waste your words on them? You should wait for the time when your words will have the proper value. If you tell them that you have to submit your views, they will begin to feel that you have truth on your side but you have not been given the opportunity to speak your argument which, they will feel, must be strong while the other man is labouring under a misconception."

SHOULD TOLERANCE HAVE SOME LIMIT?

ONE can say, "Tolerance is no doubt, a virtue but man can endure wrong treatment only up to a limit. But if anyone is provocative almost every day or, if one is harshly disposed as if by nature, how can one afford to be tolerant?"

A person who puts this question, should know that tolerance has to be lasting and complete. If an individual endured nine times out of ten, he would still not be regarded as tolerant just as a person who smokes once a week will not be called a non-smoker. Tolerance should be thorough and limitless; only then can one have the fullest reward of this virtue. It appears that a *Gyāni*— a man of knowledge— who puts the above question, forgets that he is an instrument, a co-operator in the work of establishing the highest religion and that, therefore, he has to endure a lot in order not to be irreligious or wicked. Haven't we heard the story about *Mahatma Buddha*? The story goes thus:

Once upon a time, a certain man went up to Buddha and began to swear at him. For about half an hour, the man continued reviling the *Mahatma*. Then, at the end, Buddha, who was completely undisturbed, said to him, "May I now say what I want to?" The latter, in a sore and slanderous tone, told him that he might say what he liked. With a smile, but calmly and seriously, wishing to do him good, the *Mahatma* said, "Brother, if anyone offered a thing that he wouldn't take, where would that offered thing ultimately be?" This slanderer turned in upon him, saying, "What a strange question! Too simple to be asked. Clearly, the thing will remain to be with the person who offered it." The *Mahatma* then replied, "I have declined to accept even the smallest part of whatever you tried to give me. Where will it now lie?" The man then was ashamed and became a follower of the Buddha.

Now, if the *Mahatma* had tried to put forth his point of view when the other man was in a passion, and if he insisted on his being heard, latter would have become still more passionate and not heard what the former had to say.

To sum up, we should certainly state our views but tolerantly, politely and at the proper moment. If a person slanders us repeatedly, even then we should remain unmoved. We should consider

tolerance to be under test. We should pass that test creditably. The more we have this divine virtue the higher will our divine status be.

One can say that one does recognise the importance of tolerance as a virtue but there are situations when one cannot help feeling the harshness of the other man's temper. If it were only once or so, it would not matter. But a day-to-day affair of this type is too much for him.

It would be useful to give in this connection an event from the life of Sant Namdeva. The story goes that a *Pathan*¹ spat out betel leaf from his mouth on the saint while he would be returning home after his bath in the Ganges. Namdeva would then bathe again. For a long time the *Pathān* did so invariably every day. Once the *Pathan* executed his execrable act six times and as many times did the saint bathe but never uttered a word. At long last, the *Pathān* was surprised to find Namdeva so very forbearing and tolerant. He was contrite thereupon and gave up that bad habit of his and extolled the saint's greatness. This is Namdeva; you are also a human being, wishing to become a deity and to acquire divine sovereignty from the Supreme Soul, who is maker of the deities. So, one should have the ability to endure everything including the bad and the undesirable ones.

If one just learns the life-history of each one of the dedicated sisters and brothers who attend classes regularly at this Godly University, one will be filled with spiritual strength to know about individual occurrences. Everyone of these has in his or her life endured hard trials and come off with flying colours. That explains their present holy, inspiring and exalted position. Their knowledge and their experiences are firm and complete. Though they had to face cruelty, misfortune, opposition and obstacles, they waded across these dreadful forms by dint of the strength there is in tolerance and in unflinching trust in God or by His Grace. They are therefore, successful in leading others to the pinnacle of spiritual life. Intellectual communion with God, the Supreme Soul, not only reduces, as one may put it, the guillotine or the stake to just a thorn but also grants valuable boons to man. Hence, you should always remember that, by enduring difficulties, we shall become angels.

1. A national of N.W.F. territory of Pakistan or of Afghanistan.

PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE

PEOPLE worsen situations by precipitating matters or by asking for quick solutions. If anyone in the household is laid up with fever, he gets worried and flurried, and asks for a doctor and, soon after, for another one. Impatiently he says, "I do not know why the doctor has taken all this long in coming. He be damned; call another." And, when all the three doctors, called by him in a state of nervous agitation, one after the other, have come, he will be confused and will ask his servant why he did not prevent such an odd situation from happening and why he called other doctors when the first had rightly assured that he would soon visit. If the patient does not show any improvement in a day or two, he would 'chuk off the worthless doctor' whose treatment was followed and have another to take his place. Mark, how by getting ruffled, he has to spend more, the doctors get displeased and the patient, having been subjected to several different doctors' treatment, gets bewildered, resulting also in waste of time.

Hurry gives worry and Disappointment

Similarly, anyone who wishes the reward of his action to come soon enough, would lose patience as well as his temper if there is delay or there are obstacles in the way of the reward to come. This state of his mind is due to want of adequate calmness. Take the case of a person who has started on a course of writing articles. He is, as yet, inexperienced and, consequently, there is not much virtue in what he writes; the editor of the newspaper has never heard of him as a writer and has, therefore, not published his article. Because he lacks fortitude and because he has all his hopes pinned on the publication of his article, he cannot stand delay and says to others, "Darkness pervades the world. A brilliant piece, written by me, has not been printed! I shall not write any more articles". Thus, by losing patience, he has blocked in himself the development of a talent.

A boy was late in returning home from school. The teacher had taken his class for longer hours in view of the coming examination and had taught them certain important things. The mother is lost in anxiety and, soon after, gives way to tears and goes up to her neighbours and,

with tears in her eyes, tells them that her child has not yet come. Delay has thrown her fortitude overboard, and she has not the pluck to go to the school to enquire. Instead, she weeps so much and so long that her face is swollen and her reasoning power is lying dead.

It is clear that he who, in time of difficulty, loses fortitude, loses the power of deliberation and decision. In his desire to achieve results quickly, he creates problems for himself. He loses firmness of mind. Matters get worse like a strife that increases instead of decreasing. Situations, far from getting solved, become still more difficult and frightening.

So, man should be calm and imperturbed. Soon are the good days coming. This world is ever-changing; never is it the same. A calamity that appears today will, sooner or later, disappear—all because nothing that belongs to this world or happens here is at all lasting. One thing needed in such times is to remain imperturbed. A person who is egregiously cruel today, may later on be moved to be kind. This may be so because our goodness will, by transmission, appear in him. And, the conclusion is that, today, we need to bear with a cruel man and, till better time comes, we have to keep up our spirits and that, while we are patient, we have not to be depressed but to be eminently cheerful.

HOW TO ENDURE PAIN AND TO FACE A CHRONIC DISEASE?

IN a question-answer session after a lecture, a person put to me the following question: "My mother is a chronic invalid, suffering from pain and, seeing her thus, I am sometimes pained. Mother can't bear it. Do you have any suggestions?"

I understood his position. To have sympathy is a different thing but in his case it was attachment. But I had first to say what his mother should do. So, I told him, "Please tell your mother to remember that illness is leaving us for good as it denotes scoring out of our *Karmic* debts. We are soon going to get an ever-healthy life in Heaven if we become holy and acquire divine qualities. We are just about to enter the Elysian regions as a result of our yoga and our good wishes towards all. If we do not endure pain now we shall have lost one divine virtue and this shortcoming will bar us from entry into an ever-healthy world. Hence, it would be a credit to her to endure this last illness in the last portion of this last life besides making efforts to get rid of it by proper medical treatment and by means of Yoga. She should thus change her attitude towards the diseased state and should, instead of occupying her mind with thoughts of the body, the disease and the pain, set the mind in communion with God thus:

"My God Beloved Father, I am squaring up my accounts. You are setting up for me a world of lasting happiness. From now I shall be happy for ever. The body shall be healthy. What a great good life you are granting me! I had sown wild oats only to produce thorns which are pricking me. I have learnt about how action works to produce its results and I am busy ridding myself of vices? Indeed my life is invaluable because I have met you. If this world were not now full of disease or pain, you would not incarnate yourself in this world. How else could I have met you? Though suffering, I feel myself lucky to have had the unique opportunity of hearing the story of my 84 births and learning about the whole cycle, from the beginning to the end of this world. You have now come to remove all these diseases, griefs, pain and poverty once for all. Thus, your coming there is a symbol of our luck and of the coming good days. Because of this illness, I have had the occasion to

remember you and earn ever-lasting good, as otherwise I might have been entangled in a good many ways."

Communing thus with God, she will cease to think of her illness. You should tell your mother to practise detaching the soul from the body. she should take it that situation has arisen only to make her try to settle herself in a spiritual state. If, in this state of ill health, she remains unattached to the body, like a trustee, and, recognising herself as distinct from the body, tries to overcome illness by means of Yoga, she will score very high marks in this very important subject of acquiring divine qualities. So, in times of even distress, one should not lose equipoise, but cut one's way through it by maintaining spiritual state.

Shiva Baba says that, in all such situations, man should reflect on the following lines: "This world has become worthless, being now involved in misery, disorder and uproar of one kind or another. This body of ours, being but a product of sex-lust and body-consciousness, and being not perfectly healthy, is not fit to live any longer." Thus, one should not be enamoured of the body, but should shun this diseased world and its joys. We can thus realise that illness is the means of our acquiring certain divine qualities. But, only he would attain them who will take illness not as illness but as examination and consider himself not only a patient but a student as well as an examinee and be really a patient.¹ A patient is one who has courage and patience and one under medical treatment should have tolerance. Does not will power mitigate disease?

Last fight with body-consciousness and *Māyā*

One should bear in mind that nothing can be got by crying one's heart out; anyone can lessen the force of an attack of illness by enduring it with smile and by dint of spiritual communion. We know that, generally, when anyone is suffering from a chronic disease or has slight pain, one's attention is drawn to one's body, and in spite of efforts, one's intellectual communion with God does not continue to be stable. But, one should firmly keep it in mind that this is the last fight that body-consciousness gives to the soul. The force of one's own actions is ineluctable and he fights with the weapon of yoga. Like a warrior, he should give a fight to body-consciousness, remembering all along that Shiva Baba is sending him light and might and lovingly beckoning him to Himself. Or, he should hear a discourse on divine knowledge. In this way, his mind will rest in remembrance of God, and being detached

1. The word 'patient' here means : one who has patience.

from thoughts of the body, will feel the pains less than otherwise, because the body will experience less pull and will relax better.

It has now been realised even by doctors that most of the diseases are caused by one's emotional disturbances and by mental tension. The appearance of many diseases shows that the mind of the person has not been at ease for quite sometime. So, from this point of view also one will be at an advantage if one remains in peace and practises spiritual meditation. This will refill him with energy and he will be in good cheer. By engaging himself in a *tete-a-tete* with God, the Father, Friend and Helper, some burden will be lifted off his mind.

LIBERALITY

ONLY he who is liberal or generous will give away, not the miserly man at all. Munificent people give money in charity and so does only the large-hearted man forego his vicious thoughts, in fact everything. A miserly man neither utilises his wealth nor lets others use it. So does he, who lacks generosity, let his everything run to waste. He does not utilise it for the good of others or for divine purposes and, thus, does not employ it to improve his own future. Hence, liberality precedes the great virtue of renunciation or *Tyāga*. And, to achieve *Tyāga* which is righteous and limitless in scope, you should be possessed of a super-abundance of liberality. The more liberal a man is and the larger the wisdom he possesses, the brighter his fortune is going to be. The speciality about this virtue is that it leads to good fortune.

There are different kinds of liberal people. Some rush into being liberal while others take time. The latter naturally take time to enter the world of righteous happiness, whereas the former are in *Sātyuga* at its very start and earn unbounded joy. Some take counsel with themselves and make enquiries from others before giving away anything while others follow the dictum: "He gives twice, who gives quickly"; they do not let various undesirable and bewildering thoughts disturb their feeling for renunciation. People of the latter type obtain happiness in large measure in the world of good wishes. Some make a show of this virtue, but are really crooked and their renunciation, if it is there in any form, is not prompted by the desire of public welfare. Such souls, as these, appear on the world stage at a time in *Tretā yuga* when the reward they get there is, no doubt, grand but is devoid of the full complement of happiness. There is still another class of individuals who go on discussing with themselves and with others, till the start of World Destruction, as to when they should be munificent. In their case, even the Supreme Soul has to do a lot of thinking to determine what return to make them!

In the matter of being liberal, we have not to be pondering. But as long as the matter is not understood, or if it has been understood without there being any faith in one's own understanding or in the person who makes us understand, reflection will go on. But when we have learnt about the times we are passing through, known Him who is teaching us,

learnt which kind of gain we make by which kind of action and have faith in the truth of all these processes and facts of knowledge, there shall be no scope for musing over the pros and cons. Excessive pondering is usually a sign of insufficient faith and superficial understanding.

Above all, when we know that our renunciation will not, like that of *sanyāsis*, run its course among the vicious but is all for serving mankind to accomplish the welfare of all souls, what reason is there for us to study the merits and demerits of this activity? Service is the highest duty and helping others is a virtue which blesses him who is served as also him who serves and earns the blessings of all.

QUALITIES, MANNERS AND ETIQUETTE

THE list of divine qualities, one has to imbibe, is fairly long. Included in this list are goodwill, love, unity, faith, etc. among the great ones besides good habits, good manners and etiquette which too are to be inculcated deeply. Otherwise, for want of these good manners and habits, the divine virtues, one possesses, shall remain hidden like a light under the bush. Wrong habits and bad manners are harmful to the possessor as well as to the people who come into contact with him. So, a virtue-seeker¹ gives full attention to learning manners; he does not consider them mere trifles; he is careful in adopting them because he knows that manners reflect one virtue or the other. We shall now discuss about some of the manners or forms of etiquette and shall see how they are connected with the main virtues.

How and when to talk?

Take, for example, the manner of talking. Coming in between two persons while they are talking together, or cutting in before the other person has had his say and then putting forth one's opinion—this denotes deficient powers of endurance and megalomania. He who lacks endurance and sobriety, starts on his own without hearing out the other man, because he has not fully digested what he is going to say. He, who lacks humility, cannot wait for others' permission to speak, whereas gentleness makes one ask to be permitted to express one's opinion on the subject of talk. He who does not follow even this simple rule of conduct, is definitely conceited, for he regards his views as superior and flings them about at the wrong time.

Lack of punctuality

Suppose I have to deliver a speech at a function or at a meeting and I am a habitual late-comer. The Chairman is come, but I arrive late. It is clear that my behaviour is not quite correct—the chairman in, but the speaker is not! If this is not pride, it is at least lethargy and carelessness. It bespeaks pride because I do not show respect to the chairman nor value the time of the audience, who have taken the

1. गुण ग्राहक।

trouble of coming from distant places to hear me. This is lethargy because my coming late is due to the laziness, call it childishness. Another specially evident thing is that I do not value time, be it mine or that of others. Yes, we certainly declare that the present time, i.e.; *Sangam yuga*, is very valuable and so also is our life at present, but, unfortunately, we do not act up to this declaration. You will thus mark many demerits there lie in the womb of one bad act. How many virtues are just cast away!

Taking service from others

Getting others to serve us, even though we have time and ability to serve ourselves, denotes pride and, also laziness on our part. It means that because of our vanity, we think that the other person is lower in status or is junior to us and, so, we can get him to serve us and it is his duty to obey us. Obviously, we behave thus, either because we are too lazy to work or we are vain enough to think that we are not meant for these trifling jobs which others should therefore do for us. An individual of this type accepts others' service without feeling thankful towards them. He has forgotten the inexorable course the actions take when done. He does not understand that this kind of conduct simply makes him bear a load which is augmented with his own vicious actions.

Refusal to do certain jobs

Refusing to do a job, simply because it is too low, indicates body-consciousness and sense of prestige and position as also a feeling for conventional proprieties.

Not valuing others' opinions

Dealing with others' opinions without giving them proper and patient hearing is a trait that manifests itself in want of attention to what others say. Either one does not attend to them or replies only to turn over to another topic. This is due to want of adequate regard for others, even hatred of them, and pride of one's own acumen. But when a cultured man does not like anyone's views, he hears him (the latter) and then says, "What you say is no doubt right, but . . ." In this way, he submits his point of view, giving proper regard to others.

Our feeling of gratitude

Above, we have explained a few of the rules of cultured people, their habits and their qualities. There are many more like these. But, for

all these, we are always deeply grateful to Shiva Baba and very thankful to Brahma Baba, because, in him, we find an example of how life, based on divine efforts, is lived. Shiva Baba teaches us the method of achieving purity and divine virtues while in Brahma Baba and Mamma, who is Jagadamba Saraswati, we found in physical form, noble examples for us to follow—the image of lotus-like pure life in a household, a life furnished with all divine virtues. For our sake, Brahma Baba and Divine Mother Saraswati endured opposition and suffered many hardships. How sweetly and affectionately they made us proficient in this abstruse learning, presenting it as a cheerful sport—this story of our practical life is very wonderful. They solved, in an incredibly easy way, the difficulties we had to face at any moment of our lives. We saw these divine virtues as practised in their lives and, so, we took heart of grace to have the same virtues in ourselves by means of endeavour. We have now learnt, from Brahma Baba's example, what is meant by the Angelic state, ethereal state, subtle state or *Avyakta Avasthā*. But, above all, it is to be noted that all this instruction and direction, we have been getting, comes from Shiva Baba Himself.

What is *Avyakta Avastha*?

Now, one may like to know what is meant by *Avyakta Asastha*, the ethereal state or the Angelic state.

Avyakta is that which is not corporeal or earthly, nor material nor visible to the naked eye. Hence, the term '*Avyakta Avasthā*' is another term for the spiritual state, because the soul is not an object of the senses but is subtle and self-luminous. It is not material but divine—an entity distinct from Matter. It cannot be seen with the physical eye. This state is known as 'spiritual' because it is based on soul-consciousness. Even while having a body, we should not have any sense of materiality and that is what we mean by 'the detached state', known either as '*Avyakta Avasthā* or *Atmik Avasthā*.'

Now, one has to know how that state is to be attained by means of soul-consciousness. According to God's dictum, one's state is determined by one's consciousness; he who has the awareness that he is a self-luminous, sentient point, a child of the Supreme Soul, Who is also a point of light, and that he is come from the land of light, called Brahmloka, to the stage of the world, and that all other bodied beings are essentially souls, such a one is really a lucky star: he is himself spiritually blessed.

So the main thing is to believe firmly that you are a soul, and to remember God and also your primal abode which is called Brahmloka.

The essence of all wisdom lies in being soul-conscious and, so, you should remember Him to the exclusion of other things. This is the foundation of one's future, and the only means of unlimited gain. By dint of this alone we shall come off with flying colours in the battle against Evil. This state of one's self is very sweet. It is distinct from distressing thoughts, free from desire and greed, absolved of any sense of respect or disrespect, released from vice, a happy state in which man feels his burdens lightened beyond expectation, has the experience of levitation¹, mentally roams at will in empyrean worlds and is filled to the brim with self-confidence and power. Thus, he experiences what it is to be an angel-a truly liberated soul. All the methods, we have explained in the matter of acquiring divine virtues, are not only necessary but useful for building the Angelic state. But, here-below, we are giving a few simple points.

Hints for attaining Angelic State

Firstly, we should always remember that we are returning Home. We are souls, eternal entities. Having come to the stage of the world, we have done our part. The world drama is now going to end and, so, we have to shed the body and go Home.

We should take light food. It should not be wasted taken again and again nor taken in such a quantity as to make us feel heavy and lethargic.

We should not deploy our engagements too much. We should find a suitable time, of course consistently with our other needs, for purposes of practice of meditation, study of Gyān, divine service, etc. During the course of business, we should snatch, now and then, a few minutes each time and attend calmly and seriously to building soul-consciousness.

We should act, but without any sense of attachment and like a trustee, nor should we have any desire for people's appreciation but remember that service, done unostentatiously, brings in thousand-fold returns.

We should witness events as they happen, considering them to be pre determined. These events happened identically in the previous world-cycle and will be repeated in the next cycle and in all cycles *ad infinitum*. So, there is nothing new. Let us hold on to this truth with hoops of steel.

1. He feels as if he is above the ground.

Besides this, our mental state should be bereft of attachment or egotism and be, therefore, like a lotus. And, we should reflect deeply on points of Godly Knowledge, churn, as it were, the ocean of thought, and then enjoy solitude. Adopting these ways, we will be able to attain the Angelic state, i.e. *Avyakta Avasthā*.

SPIRITUAL EFFORTS AND ATTITUDES

JUST as remembrance of God, i.e. yoga, gives us joy so does one kind of vice or another or a mistake of ours cause the disappearance of that joy. Hence, if and when a useless thought strikes you, as it were, unaccountably, you should, through one of the senior sisters,¹ place this confusing situation before *Bap-Dada*² for the purpose of treating this diseased state of the mind in the shortest possible time and of getting instructions, directions, etc., to avert the recurrence of lapse of this kind and, thereby, also lighten the weight off your chest. It is no use continuing to cogitate over a lapse that has already occurred while saying to yourself that, unfortunately, you make mistakes and your spiritual state is not satisfactory. Pondering in this manner will not only not wash out the lapse but will increase the duration of mental pain due to this lapse. So, abandon thinking over a slip or an omission. Resolve and march ahead. To be burdened with the sense of impropriety is in itself a lapse from normality. As deficiency can be made good not by worrying over it but by thinking of the *Sampuran* i.e., the completely evolved state of the self, so we should never cease to try to see that the course of the intellect is always clear, that it does not get lost in confusion and that there is no obstacle in the form of any vicious thought. Therefore, to guard yourself against such contingencies, the lamp of yoga, i.e. divine remembrance should be supplied incessantly with oil in the form of divine knowledge.

There is diminution of happiness when any thought of envy or hatred creeps in. But when the wise man² feels the coming of such a feeling, he should remember that it portends his fall. Greatness consists in philanthropy, large-heartedness, magnanimity and goodwill towards all. Every soul has been playing its individual part from times beyond memory. Anyone can, by dint of effort or as a result of his past actions, rise high, and when you have, before you, an instance of person higher² than you in life, you should say to yourself, "He has done a great deed by virtue of which he has risen to high rank, and I shall also do my best. I cannot compare with him." Here, in this world, every soul has its own role to act, all cannot be alike. Envyng others or looking maliciously at

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2. A man having divine knowledge. A Gyani.

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them is not going to diminish their good fortune nor increase your own. On the contrary, a disgruntled man causes decline in this own case by falling low in life. If there is discontent, it exists in him. His spiritual progress and his yoga are retarded. So, when we see anyone rising high, the right thing to do is to try to raise our level by our own effort and exercise tolerance and fortitude and be sweet in our dealings with him. If we are happy to see others rise high and are sweet to them, surely this attitude of ours will prove of help to lead us upward and, what is more important, without any clash of views or interests and without giving rise to pain and ill-will. We should discard jealousy, but we may compete with them.

Similarly, does anger, to a greater or lesser extent, enter the mind. We should then think that anger is like a big monster, who robs us of the treasures of knowledge and happiness and has, therefore, to be got rid of sooner than later. Only by keeping the mind safe from vices will happiness stay and manifest itself on the countenance which is the mirror.

These vicious incursions kill happiness. In the course of one's life there arise such situations as create storms or high waves in the mind to disturb it awfully. These situations are of our own making. When our own actions recoil on us, we have to face the resulting impact whether we face it with a smile or with wails. One thing is sure that wallings simply increase the pain. Thus, when we are unable to prevent these situations, events or experiences, we should change our attitude towards them. And, adopting the correct attitude is always in our hands.

Take the case of a man who is suffering from a disease. One attitude consists in his getting very worried and weeping in despair. The other attitude is that he traces his illness to his own immoderate habits and, therefore, he shall have to bear the consequences, or that it is the result of actions done by him in past lives and he may, by thus experiencing it, square up his old accounts. Adopting the latter attitude is the way of wisdom; it makes man really cheerful.

Another instance. A friend, relation or associate of ours dies. One view-point can be that we consider this death an unbearable loss, and cry bitter tears because there is attachment. The other viewpoint can be that we consider the soul to be immortal which has, in the present case, only changed the tabernacle—the body. All our dealings with the departed soul have come to an end, and it will go there where it has to play its part under a different physical name and form, and that's why it has changed its physical body and environments for new ones. Before

this, it had come from somewhere after having shaken off the body there and, having put on another body as one would change one's clothes, played its part in association with us. He and we have not *always* been together, and, so, the relationship that is not perpetual is obviously to end sooner or later. In this world, which is a field of activity, all our transactions with the soul in that form, with that name and with that particular relationship are over, and, so, the part that played could not have subsisted any longer. When this attitude or point of view, dictated by wisdom, is adopted, not a trace of sorrow will be there. The wise man will be cheerful in a situation in which the unwise considers himself sad, because the former knows that his tears will not bring back the departed soul, nor give it peace, though the truth is that one can make to that soul one's offering of peace. Hence, remaining in spiritual communion with God and keeping calm are good to the soul—to the departed soul as well as to oneself.

DIVINE SERVICE

WE should do divine service in a liberal spirit, because it is really undying and unlimited in its rewards. By means of this kind of service, it become easy to do away with bad thoughts. The result will be permanent as otherwise when one is idle, ugly thoughts turn up, as it were, out of nowhere. The blessings we earn will bring us spiritual improvement. Here it is that humility, tolerance, straightforwardness and the like virtues are stabilised in man's make-up. Not only delight as such but spiritual rise is acquired. So, we should do divine service unremittingly, because only once in a *Kalpa*—a world cycle—do we, who are of Brahma's family, have the chance of doing this extraordinary kind of service. We do not lay anybody under an obligation to us but make our future bright. This kind of service, by giving knowledge and teaching Yoga to others, is the means of converting base latencies into righteous ones, living life of self-denial at all moments and thus training us.

Those who serve all are never conceited. They consider it as their duty to serve others in spite of what they may hear about them in their praise or dispraise, and our duty, we should note, is to instil divine virtues in others. So, he who serves in this manner has to inculcate in himself divine virtues. Thus, service uplifts man's own self also, Shiva, the Supreme Soul, who is the Ocean of Knowledge, Peace and Bliss and who is all-seeing and Omnipotent and Beneficent, says to us through Prajapita Brahma, "I am here to do service to the world. I am your most obedient Servant; Redeemer of souls as I am, I have descended into the world as people have called Me here to serve you by purifying you, and thus take you back to sweet Silence Home, from the world of sorrows to the regions of happiness." So does Prajapita Brahma say "I am here to serve you. I am a beggar prince. When Shiva Baba and Brahma Baba talk with so much meekness, we ought to be very polite and humble.

We have also to bear in mind that we are the instruments of the Supreme Soul, the great Benefactor, for the purpose of establishing the righteous world. He who has to work as God's instrument has to hear a lot and bear it all. He has to be sweet and modest to that he does not offend anyone. He sees to it that his treatment is invariably good so that no one, with whom he comes into contact, turns from God, and that he

is not instrumental in harming anyone. So, if we remember that, in order to accomplish the divine task of doing good to others, we are only an instrument, we will learn to be humble and we will do service with dedication and zeal.

FRIENDS AND ENEMIES OF A YOGI

MAN, by nature, wants to make friends and to keep safe from his enemies. But, about a Yogi, it is said that he has neither friends nor enemies. In one sense, this is true, but in another, a Yogi also has friends and enemies though in a different form. A Yogi should know well what is helpful to him in his efforts to reach the highest and what is obstructive on his way to his goal.

The God-Sermonizer of Gita has said that divine virtues are conducive to liberation and the demoniacal nature is conducive to bondage and destruction. Unless one becomes divine by nature, now, before casting off this body, one cannot take birth in the Deity World of supreme purity. Therefore, one must become '*Marjivā*' in this life, i.e. one must 'kill' one's evil psyche and create, in its place the superstructure of divine nature based on divine virtues.

By constant absorption of mind in meditation or the righteous Raja Yoga, the divine virtues automatically appear. But the reverse of it is also true. By inculcating these divine attributes, one quickly secures poise and fixity also in what is called '*Nirvikalpa Samadhi*', i.e. Yōga undisturbed by evil thoughts.

One, who robs a person of his earnings or ruins his health or disturbs his peace of mind or makes his life wretched, is an enemy of the person. On the other hand, one who helps and pleases a man is his friend. Even so, sex-lust, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance, jealousy, hatred, violence, harsh-nature, etc. are one's strong and harmful enemies because they disturb one's mind and interfere in one's Yoga which is the source of one's happiness, health and highest attainment. If one ever observes minutely, one will discover that what disturbs a man in his Yoga is, invariably, one of his vices. Therefore, the reverse of it is also true; it means that the virtues are one's useful friends; they help a soul in Yoga with God—the Virtue personified.

So, it would be of merit to mention here some of the divine virtues which one must try to imbibe in one's nature or have intimate friendship with.

Brahmacharya or Continence

In the deity-world of the days of Golden and Silver Ages, regeneration or reproduction of human race was by Yoga Power and divine love and not by sex-indulgence or the vice, called 'Sex-Lust'. Therefore, if one aspires for deity-status in *Vaikuntha* or the Heavenly Abode—the world of deities who are completely viceless and non-violent and are possessed of the divine attributes to the full extent of 16 celestial degrees¹—one ought to practise complete continence or chastity now and here. It is on account of their *Brahmacharya* and purity that Shri Lakshmi, Shri Narayana and Shri Sita and Shri Rama are worshipped and adored even today. Therefore, it behoves on who considers himself to be from the progeny of those deities, to follow in the footsteps of the worthy ancestors. A true *Vaishnavite* is one who lives up to the standard of purity, set up by these dual corporeal manifestations of Vishnu's virtues. A '*Pāṇḍava*' also is one who is out to conquer his five organs of actions.

If one follows this divine tradition, it is quite possible that he will be obstructed, in his efforts, by those who are epicurians and have a great liking for the vices. But in waging this sacred internal war with the vices—among whom Sex-Lust is the chief—one ought to lay down one's life even for, he who lays down his life in this struggle before the full period of 'Confluence Yuga' is over, goes to the Heavenly Abode.

The present life of corporeal beings is the last one in the World Cycle. The forthcoming world-destruction is just in sight. And everyone knows that when one is on death-bed, one ought to remember God and not sex-lust or relatives with whom one has had lustful relationships. The forthcoming destruction will oblige even the unwilling persons also to renounce this vice. But if one gives up Sex-Lust in obedience to God's command, before the holocaust, one shall assuredly attain Supreme Sanctity, peace and prosperity for 2500 years at a stretch in the ensuing World Cycle.

From Copper Age onwards, mankind has been indulging in sex-lust and other vices. Now, everyone ought to recapture one's divine status by becoming completely viceless and a Yogi in this last life. Life after life, man has been catching the contagion of Sex-Lust and other vices, but now that God, the Supreme Father, has incarnated, one must inherit one's God-Fatherly birth-right of Supreme Sanctity for, He is Purity Absolute.

1. 16 Kala Sampuran.

The Gita-Sermonizer has said that from Sex-Lust is born anger; from anger appears infatuation; these obstruct one's soul-consciousness, and the loss of soul-consciousness leads the soul to permanent damnation. So, one who is interested in spiritual uplift, ought to observe Brahmacharya.

Non-Violence

The deities of Golden-Age are completely non-violent by thought, word and deed. They do not hurt one another's feelings. They do not cause annoyance or harm to one another. Their language is very sweet. Their acts are all deity-like. Therefore, one who aspires for deity-status, must renounce violence of all kinds.

Cleanliness and Purity

As everyone knows, worshippers of deities keep their temples clean. They wash and dress the idols neat and they themselves also go to the temples in clean dress. In temples, incense is kept smouldering so as to radiate fragrance. Offerings to deities consist of *Sāttwic* articles of food. All these practices should indicate that deities led a life of cleanliness and purity. Therefore, one who practises Godly Yoga for *Jiwan Mukti*, must practise all-round purity and cleanliness.

Non-Attachment

Of deities, it is well known that they lived a life of detachment as a lily lives in a pond. Therefore, as a Yogi, one should live life like a lotus or a tortoise. One should not get affected by the vices like hatred, jealousy or attachment with one's bodily relatives or one's wealth; one should not get engrossed in the worldly actions.

Sweetness of Behaviour

One ought to look on all embodied beings round about him, as 'souls'. One should be soul-conscious. One should see the imperishable in all beings and ought to see friends and foes alike,¹ without letting hatredness and thought of violence or revenge enter one's mind.

One should be inoffensive, agreeable and wholesome in speech and should observe geniality of speech and cheerfulness and tranquility of mind even on provocation, for such is the sweet nature of deities.

1. This is called Samdrishti.

Control over Mind and Senses

When devout worshippers of deities go for offering homage and prostrations at the altar, they observe control over their senses and mind. But now that one has to endeavour for worship-worthy deity life, one must hear no evil, talk no evil, see no evil and do no evil.

Contentment, Steadfastness and Cheerfulness

It means that one ought to be contented with whatever comes unasked for as the saying goes: "*Ichhā Mātrām Avidyā*¹, i.e., desire is a sign of ignorance. Deities never beg nor make demand. Furthermore, realising that this World Drama is faultless and pre-ordained, one ought to keep balance of mind in favourable and unfavourable circumstances, relying on the singular help, support and succour of God. The deities always bear smile on their faces; even so, we should live contented in heart.

1. इच्छा मात्रं अविद्या।

LET THERE BE NO SLACKNESS

THE period we are passing through at present is called 'The Confluence Age.'¹ Iron Age² is now making room for Golden Age³. We are engaged in efforts to become viceless and divinised by applying, in our daily life, the spiritual knowledge, being imparted to us by God. The aim of receiving this knowledge is to become deities. In Satyuga⁴ alone shall we see heavenly fruition and deity-life. At present our efforts are directed to attaining the noble stage as that of angels or, in other words, the position that celestial being hold. To be able to do so, we have to become examples of virtue and real knowledge. Without acquiring divine virtues, we cannot become angels, nor be established in a truly state nor acquire the kind of life that deities lead.

Knowledge brings virtue

God's knowledge and divine virtues are truly linked together very deeply. Knowledge is the seed which brings forth divine virtues. If these are not to be found in anyone, we should understand that the seed has not been sown at all or not sown in the right manner or not looked after or nursed with care after it has been sown. Hence, Knowledge has to be grasped well in order to ensure the acquisition of these virtues. The more deeply and strongly Knowledge is grounded, the stronger and higher will be the edifice of virtue. If we cannot properly cultivate in ourselves any particular quality, it shows that we are not truly cognizant of some particular facet of knowledge, or our understanding is not mature, or we have not the ability to put in practice this particular item of knowledge. If knowledge is not fully and properly grasped by our Reason, or there is not complete faith in the Knowledge we are being given, our efforts cannot be full, proper or stable and will, therefore, slacken till the crash comes.

No slackness or negligence

Now-a-days, people use the word "effort" with several different meanings. Real effort is that which does not allow of any repetition of a

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1. The Conjunction of the end of Iron-Age of one World Cycle and Golden Age of the ensuing cycle Sangam Yuga.
 2. Kaliyuga. 3. Satyuga. 4. Golden Age.

mistake of the past but a good many people commit mistakes frequently, and, on being called to attention, say: "Well, mistakes are bound to occur in spite of us; aren't we just *Purushārthis*, i.e. seekers; we are yet far from perfect." Rendering these things thus, they become rather careless and loose. Thus, they do not succeed in raising themselves even till the last moment when Destruction starts, because they are still engaged in fighting vice and have obviously not yet conquered it. Thus they cannot be completely pure, i.e. true *Brahmins*¹; they become simply *Kshatriyas*.² In this way, they remain deflected for ever from real good luck, across the chart of which they have, by their own slackness and negligence, drawn a line to annul it. In spite of having had God Himself to teach them the highest wisdom, they do not work hard enough to achieve the highest spiritual stage!

On the eve of his examination, a student who has to take it, works day and night and, with a view to obtaining a high position, is deeply engaged in his efforts to make up his deficiencies. So also when we know that the course of our studies have been completed and the time to revise these is about to be over and that there is very short time for us to apply to life whatever we have been taught, we should not waste a single moment but work heart and soul to become proficient in all the divine virtues. In the world around us, we observe that those who study history, geography, mathematics, science, politics, etc., but do not pass their examination in the first attempt, do take the examination next year and, certainly, do feel sorrow and even remorse. But, in respect of the study we have here to make, there is no second chance for us to take the examination if we have failed once. This kind of knowledge is given only once, i.e. in the period of transition from *Kaliyuga* to *Satyuga*, by the Supreme Soul, the Ocean of Knowledge, in order to bring in the Golden Age. And, so, if we do not become all-round virtuous before World Destruction sets in, we shall have lost all chances of doing well. An irreparable loss this failure is going to cause! There is another point of difference: in the case of the purely worldly studies, study is not the only means of sustenance, whereas the position that we have in the coming 21 lives shall depend upon the quality and depth of our efforts at present. Our health, wealth and happiness are determined accordingly. How great is the effort needed to achieve all this! Why should we feel fagged or be careless when we know that this effort of ours is the means of grand income in the coming 21 lives?

1. & 2. These do not refer to any castes but to stages of spiritual purity. The latter refers to those who have not yet won victory over the vices.

Let no barriers weaken our efforts

We have observed that if two persons love each other deeply, they are, in their ecstasy, lost to all regard for propriety and never care much for the taboos set up by people in general. But, we love God, who is the Saviour of all and is the transcendental Father. Why should the barriers set up by people weaken our efforts? To Him from whom as the Supreme Father, we get all we want we should be thoroughly linked spiritually. He has come into this world with a view to granting us Beatitude by imparting Knowledge and teaching Yoga to us and it is wrong to be slack in learning and, consequently, late in acquiring our Beatitude (*Jeevan Mukti*). There is a well-known saying: "Among a million souls, a rare soul makes any effort" Hence, it is clear enough that we should not be afraid of what the million idlers around us may say.

Considering all these things, we should give up the habit of carelessness or that of the tendency towards weariness, restful ease, regard for *Tamoguni* conventions of the Iron Age, fear of public opinion or any other allied feelings. Nor should we allow looseness or laxity to come in and stop our endeavours because of the walls erected by our own imaginings. With alacrity, with fervour and without needing frequent reminders, we should start on the course of our endeavours the very first prompting and accelerate them because it is our bounden duty as also our own gain that we should be doing so.

Besides, if we remember that each one of these divine virtues is very precious as it will, when duly inculcated in us, assures us peace, bliss, rulership in Paradise and make us superlatively fortunate, there will naturally be great intensity in our efforts.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

THERE have been many revolutions on the globe during the past couple of centuries. One of these is known as 'The Glorious Revolution'. This refers to the replacement of Autocracy by constitutional government in England in the year 1688-89. As a result of this revolution, the King in England was deprived of real political power and also of 'divine rights'. The king had, by now, lost not only the crown of light but his crown of gold also now lost much of its lustre and significance.

But everyone knows that in spite of this revolution, England has its own unsolved problems to this day and it has its own ills and troubles too. The human desire for constant happiness is yet to be realised there also. The politics divorced from religion had its own merits in a certain context but, over all, politics has been moving away from ethical discipline.

Industrial Revolution

There has been another revolution, called the 'Industrial Revolution'. It roughly refers to the period 1750-1850 in which striking changes in economic structure took place in England and in other parts of Europe. The invention of the Arkwright's Spinning Frame and the Cartwright's Loom and steam-boats, railway, and later on, electricity, etc., changed England and many other parts of Europe into industrial society. It raised the standard of living of the people but it also gave rise to new problems. It has been leading gradually to air-pollution, water-pollution, noise-pollution, industrial unrest and to many psychological and social problems. The Industrialised countries have become ultra-materialistic and permissive societies and the morality, in its original connotation, has almost vanished.

French Revolution

Another well-known revolution has been The French Revolution. The movement in the year 1789 was followed by large-scale upheavals, bloodshed and reign of terror. It is said that the Revolution represents the ideal of liberty, Popular Sovereignty and Equality before Law. But, everyone knows how far mankind has realised these in practice. The political pressure, the role of money, the delays in dealing with cases, th

multi-tier system of judiciary (with its own merits of course), the rising cost of getting justice, the rowdy elements wielding the power that comes out of the barrel of a gun—these and many other factors are still there to deprive man of getting justice of enjoying equality before Law.

Political and Economic Revolutions

Another kind of revolution was wrought by economic thought. It was based on postulates or theories formulated by Marx and Angelles and, in execution, was the handiwork of Lenin and his comrades. It is now known as the Great Bolshevik Revolution, or the October (1917) Revolution. It was thought that this would enable the world to achieve the ideal embodied in the words: "From each according to his capacity to each according to his needs." This has ended, to an extent, the problem, in some countries, of everyone getting something to eat but, it has deprived man of his conscience, his right to religious practices, freedom of expression, and his liberty.

Scientific Revolution

There have also been some other revolutions, big or small. In fact, every time man achieves a break-through in the field of technology, biology, biochemistry or other branches of knowledge, it is claimed that something revolutionary has been attained. Thus, atomic fission, man's landing on the moon, the deciphering of the genetic code, the greater knowledge of hormones, the development of laser beams and a host of other achievements or inventions of man are said to be leading man to a new age. Test-tube babies of Robbotts and Wabbot, Computers and Automation, easy transplant of heart and other physical organs or vital body-parts, manufacturing of synthetic meat and other articles of food, changing of sex by human intervention and doing so many other things which, until the other day, appeared to belong to land of fantasy and fiction, are now supposed to have brought about a new revolution.

Of late, much has also been said about the Green Revolution. New methods of soil-improvement, cultivation, crop-raising use of chemical fertilisers, etc., have been discovered and it is thought that the world would soon have a great leap forward in agricultural production so that not a single person would remain unfed.

All these and many more revolutions having taken place, one would like to ask: "Has the world become a better place to live? Does man lead a peaceful existence now? Have relations between one man and the other or one country and the other been built on the basis of understanding,

love, amity and co-operation. Or, though the world has shrunk in size as a result of the media of fast communication gap between man and his neighbour been reduced? Has the need to build up huge armies, stocks of armaments and means of mass-massacre been eliminated or many countries are still bleeding profusely, hurt by the weapons? Have the swords been turned into ploughs or many countries are still dying economically due to heavy expenditure incurred to appease the Demon of War or due to exploitation of masses by a privileged few?

One would find it impossible to refute the charge that Imperialistic Powers and the Red Revolution have spilt the world into blocks and they have made the earth red with blood at many places. The spoils of Industrial Revolution also are many. Man has almost turned into machine and, at the place at which he is going, he would soon find that the life has lost all the charm, form or taste for him and has become dull and insipid and, surrounded on all sides by artificiality, he would even be ready to commit suicide. Already mankind is living in 'islands floating on sewers,' eating food preserved for months in sealed tins or in refrigerators, living as a mere acquaintance among the members of his own family. This is not to deny that all these revolutions had their own merits but one cannot find words suitable and adequate to announce that the world today is stuck up in swamp or muck. Or, you could say that it is being kept alive on artificial respiration.

The reason for all this state of affairs is that the world to-day sheerly lacks in ethical standards and moral considerations. It has no worthy ideal unto it

Moral and Spiritual Revolution

So, what the world badly needs today is the Moral and Spiritual Revolution. Man today is living on black money, black market, black-out in respect of spiritual light. People have darkened mind, clouded intellects and shadowy methods. This points out to the need for bringing in spiritual light so that man can see his way and can visualise his goal. Other revolutions have tried to provide man with ample material comfort but have glaringly overlooked his spiritual advancement and moral well-being. The result is that there is emptiness of spirit, weakness of moral fibre, great fall in moral standards and the world today has become hot bed of strife of all kinds.

May we announce it through this book that such a revolution which is the only hope of the wise is already taking place, and it is the duty of all those who cherish moral reconstruction of the world to rally round so as

multi-tier system of judiciary (with its own merits of course), the rising cost of getting justice, the rowdy elements wielding the power that comes out of the barrel of a gun—these and many other factors are still there to deprive man of getting justice of enjoying equality before Law.

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May we announce it through this book that such a revolution is the only hope of the wise is already taking place, and it is those who cherish moral reconstruction of the world to

to give strength and speed to this. May it be known to all that virgins and women or mothers and sisters of Bharat are the flag-bearers of this greatest of all revolutions; they are the torch-bearers and the stalwarts and it is they who, with the guidance and directions of God, the World-Father, are leading in this noble cause. Already many spiritual brothers and sisters have rallied round the nucleus so as to serve the mankind.

May we also strike a note of warning. The world today is quickly drifting on to the side of crisis of character and faith and is proceeding towards a catastrophe due to this own evil deeds and time is running out quickly. Therefore, those who feel sincerely concerned about their own spiritual elevation and the world's betterment would do well to avoid loss of time.

WHAT OUGHT AND OUGHT NOT TO BE DONE

EVERYONE should know what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Unless one understands his duty towards his family, his country and society, as also the duty to his own-self, not only does his own life lack peace, but the country and society also suffer from turbulence and turmoil.

There has been a difference of opinion on the subject ever since man came to be confronted with this question. For instance, some people believe that non-violence is the foremost duty of man, whatever the circumstances, while others contend that, for the protection of one-self as well as others against cruelty and injustice, it is the essential duty of man to resort to violence, for non-violence under such circumstances will simply amount to encouragement of both. Believers in non-violence rebut this argument by saying: "If the other fellow fails in his duty by committing violence, there is no reason why we should allow ourselves to be influenced by him and do likewise". In normal circumstances, every person is non-violent, the test of the person's non-violent attitude or behaviour itself arises only in a situation where there is likelihood of violence to occur. Love, non-aggression, sweet speech, patience and tolerance and not their opposites, viz. malice, violence, hate, hostility and vengeance are the only weapons permissible to a wise person to fight with. Has not God Himself laid down the dictate in the Gita: "Child, what is duty is a question about which even the *Pundits*, i.e. the erudite scholars or knowledgeable persons, are in quandary, their intellect being, susceptible to emotions—hence thou can learn about what is action, non-action and bad action from Me alone".

Man's intellect is limited; it lacks discrimination and is consequently susceptible to false knowledge. Hence, in the matter of what is or is not, one's duty, the Supreme Father Shiva, the Ocean of knowledge, Himself has to impart Gyān beneficial both for the individual and society. And, yet, when we invite people to spare some little time for acquiring this knowledge, the reply: "We are carrying on all right, as it is. As householders, we are doing our duty towards our wives and children by earning our livelihood so as to provide them with food, shelter, clothing, education, medical care, etc. Even otherwise, we try not to tell falsehood to harm or deceive others in day-to-day dealings. As far the rest, we are

goaded by the general trend of today's world which, of course renders some little deviation from the norms almost inescapable"

Is man really doing his duty to-day?

To the argument advanced above let it be clarified that God's reply is "Whatever you say may be correct so far as it goes, but don't you ever indulge in anger or attachment, abuse and malign other people before your wives and children? Aren't anger and attachment two great passions or vices which ought to be shunned? Wouldn't your children be led thereby to imitate your conduct and behaviour and make themselves miserable like you in their later lives?" You may be satisfying their economic and social needs, but, surely, you cannot protect them for good against the on-slaughts of disease, grief, accident and misfortune? It is thus obvious that you have not fully discharged your duty towards them. To provide food and house for your children is nothing very much; it is not fulfilment of the high purpose of a man's life. The satisfaction it brings is limited and short-lived. Even a sparrow does the same to feed and nest its young ones and, perhaps, with much more love and labour. It fetches to feed grain by grain from somewhere in its little beak to pass it lovingly into the beaks of its off-springs. Laboriously also, it builds a soft nest as its heritage for them to enjoy after its death. Thus, bringing up one's progeny is something which even birds and beasts also do equally with man. Man has been considered the highest species by the Lord of Creation. The purpose of his existence must, by the same token, be the highest. Man can evolve, by his intellect, codes of conduct and behaviour. If he does not relate his existence to an ideal and adorn his mind with Godly knowledge, in what way then does he differ from animals who lack both reason and intelligence?

If they have not shed blood, they have strangled someone's soul

People say: "We do not shed any blood or commit violence". Presumably, they don't do so with a sharp-edged weapon. But what about the sharp, cruel words their tongues burst forth from their mouths? Do these words pierce any less than the sharp-edged sword flashed out of its sheath? More poisonous than the arrow and more fatal than gun-shots are, indeed the words they must have uttered at some delicate heart. May be, there are rare exceptions who have not committed such cruelty in their lives. But, is there a husband who has not violated the chastity of his wife pledged to strict celibacy? Is there a male who has not invaded the body of a female by shooting lascivious glances like cupid's sharp

arrows pulled at the bow-strings of his eyes? Is there a man who has not flown his squadrons of paratroopers of sex-lust, anger, avarice, attachment and arrogance high up above the aerodrome of his heart and landed them to raid the territory—body or mind—of another person?

People say: "We do not tell lies nor do we deceive others" It is possible that trader here and there does not adulterate the food articles he sells or he maintains a correct register of his sales. It is possible also that an office clerk works honestly and diligently and does not resort to false excuses for obtaining leave. But does he not believe as well as proclaim himself to be the progeny only of his worldly father, ignoring all the time the spiritual Fatherhood of God. To go about in this world, believing oneself to be the body and not the soul and ignoring the child-Father relationship with God—what falsehood and deception could be greater than this? And, has not this self-deception caused immeasurable harm to both the individual and society by depriving them of the benign love and divine heritage of God? May be, there are individuals who believe in the existence of the soul and the Supreme Soul. But, there is a difference between belief in and cognition of these two eternal entities and still more between knowing them and moulding one's thought and conduct in life accordingly. There are many people in the world today who, for lack of proper knowledge of the soul and the Supreme Soul, believe God to be omnipresent or, in other words, that He pervades the dog and the cat, the wasp and the snake, the dirt and filth, as also the excreta of man and beast. they simply do not know that, in reality, God is not all-pervasive and to entertain such a belief is, in fact, the worst abuse and insult one can offer to the Supreme Father Who, as such, is worthy of the highest reverence and Who is the Universal Benefactor. It should thus be clear that the person who says he does not abuse, insult or malign others is yet guilty of the greatest sin in that he has indulged in abusing the God-Father Himself from time immemorial. How ironical that he does not even know this!

The duty of obliterating or wiping off the sins of previous births

Granting that a man has, in his life, escaped from commission of the above-mentioned sins, it is reasonable to assume that he must have committed them in his previous births for, surely, the pain and grief he is visited with in this life does not occur without a cause! Hence, it is also an obvious duty of man to wash off the sins collected in his present life as also those carried over from previous births. Not only so, it is also his duty to acquaint his wife and children with this knowledge. Moreover, to know the difference between what is, and what is not duty, it is necessary

to know whether there is an eternal entity, named the soul, as distinct from the body it inhabits; also whether that soul has ante-natal existences and consequently reaps the fruits of actions, good or bad, done in previous births in a subsequent one. It is necessary also to know whether, apart from this material world, there is another entity called the 'Other World' or the 'heavenly world' where the soul dwells without the body, free from experiencing the fruits of actions, righteous, or unrighteous, committed during births. The question also arises whether our worldly relationship—as between son and father, brother and sister, husband and wife, etc.—are all that really matters or whether, apart from these, there is some other relationship which is permanent and ideal. It is only after understanding this ideal relationship that one can determine one's duty with regard to the earthly relationships stated above. All these questions fall within the purview of the 'knowledge about duty'. So long as one has not learnt the answers to these questions or, in other words, acquired the Godly knowledge with regard to them, he cannot avoid doing some wrong action or the other.

These days, some people say: "It is man's duty to provide food and money to the poor, to open hospitals for the sick, in short, to serve the needy, the afflicted and the downtrodden in society. But the point to be clarified in this context is why, despite man's persistent and dedicated efforts in the service of suffering humanity, both poverty and disease, instead of diminishing, are constantly on the increase. There are millions of people today who are poor and helpless, millions of people also afflicted with sickness and disease in hospitals,—whose number also is increasing—needing succour and social protection. If the number of hospitals is increasing, so also is the human population with its concomitant of hunger and disease. In short, the world, far from becoming any better, is, on the contrary, becoming more and more miserable to live in, despite man's herculean efforts to ameliorate it. May it not be said that only the form and shape of things is changing and not their quality? And the poor and the needy, instead of being served are, in fact, being loaded with the burden of *Karma* (action) and bound even more firmly in its chains! This kind of social service is all right, so far as it goes. What is more relevant and beneficial in this context is to uplift man spiritually by equipping him with the Godly knowledge of what is right and what is wrong so as to render him hard-working, self-reliant and capable of washing off the sins of his previous births, the fruit of which he is reaping in this life.

We come across people who say: "It is the duty of man simply to continue acting desirelessly which is called *Karma Yoga* and leads one to

salvation in the end". But the question posed above still persists, viz., how is it that the world is so unhappy and miserable, despite all the action done and being done to make it a better and more liveable place? The obvious answer is that there is action all right, but not the right action, i.e., action based on '*dharma*' or '*duty*'. The phrase '*desireless action*' is simply a misnomer, a contradiction in terms, or, in other words, '*desireless action*' pre-supposes the existence of a desire to act desirelessly. The world itself is a field of action in which there is simply no escape from action. The question simply is one of right action or wrong action. A man works in an office, another in a factory, a third does trading in a shop, they are all doing actions which are classified differently according to their nature, but the doers of those actions can, by no means, be termed '*Karma Yogis*' for the simple reason that while doing them their mind and intellect are not oriented towards or linked with God—which is what the word '*Yoga*' really means?

What has been said in the foregoing pages may be summed up as follows:

It is essential for a person to know about (i) the difference between 'action', 'non-action' or 'bad-action'—i.e. the difference between what is duty and what is non-duty or between '*Karma* and '*Dharma*', (ii) the difference between the soul and the Supreme Soul and (iii) about the world as a field of action or the school of experience. So long as man does not seek this knowledge, his actions will lack this real basis and cannot, as such, be related to '*duty*' or '*dharma*' in the highest sense of the world. In other words, he cannot be a *Yogi*, much less a *Karmayogi*, for the word '*Yoga*' itself connotes connection of the soul with the Supreme Soul.

Do we not see that, when a man returns home from office after the long day's work, he resumes his awareness of his various earthly relationships with his wife and children as well as relatives and conducts himself towards them as father and husband etc.? Similarly, when he attends office next morning, he automatically remembers who is his boss, who is a colleague and who is his subordinate, regulating his behaviour towards each according to the relationship. The Knowledge of these various relationships is based on his body-consciousness though it is his soul which regulates his conduct towards each. So also, when one is aware that his original home is *Shāntidhām*, the abode of peace, that he is an actor, come on the world-stage, invested with particular garments, i.e., his body, to play their various parts, he will learn to act as one soul towards another, i.e., as a witness or spectator, actuated by *dharma*, i.e., duty in the highest sense of the word. It is, therefore, by inculcating soul-consciousness in man that the present world of struggle and conflict, of

turmoil and turbulence, of grief and sorrow, can be transformed into a heavenly world of purity, peace and prosperity.

**The line of demarcation between what is right and what is
wrong action**

The dividing line between them as clarified above, has been drawn by God Himself. The main cause of the woes of the world throughout the ages has been the body-consciousness of man. God has now given us the *Mantra*, the Key, viz., determining oneself a soul, with its original attributes of peace, bliss, love, light and might and doing action in that consciousness rather than in consciousness of one's body which is the root cause. This is the panacea, God has prescribed for the ills of this world, the application of which can turn it verily into heaven on this earth. This is the experience of thousands of men and women who have practised this divine *Mantra* in their worldly lives.

All kinds of remedies have been tried, but found wanting. Let this *Mantra*, God's own, be now tried by all fellow beings to realise its wonderful efficacy! Let us all benefit by this gift of God!

KEYS OF THOUGHTS FOR SELF-ELEVATION

THERE are a good many methods which, when duly acted upon, ensure good habits besides rendering our nature divine. And, if we make special efforts to follow the following two methods, we should be doing good to ourselves. These appear to be quite easy and, therefore, rather ordinary, but practising them is surely of great spiritual benefit to us.

1. I am God's own

One of these things, demanding special attention, is that we should understand ourselves to be children of the Supreme Father, who is the Supreme Soul. Only let this remembrance that you are His child be ever with you, and you will be immensely exhilarated. If you, understand that you are His, and His alone, you will not employ your body, mind or your wealth in *Māyā* ways for you would otherwise be betraying the trust reposed in you by the Lord. By this means, your will be helped considerably in the task of stopping the ingress of impure thoughts in order to become righteous. *Māyā*, ordinarily recognised to be tough, can easily be overpowered in no time.

Just think of a soldier, who guards the frontier between Pakistan and India. You will find that what makes him lay down his life to stop any incursion by the enemy is the faith that he is a soldier of Hindustan (India) and that his job is to see that the enemy does not cross the line. This faith, in other words, this remembrance of his, inspires his being. Similarly, if anyone of us made it the mainstay of his life that he is Lord's (i.e. belongs to the Lord) and will not at any cost permit *Māyā* to enter his thoughts, surely will purity be a part of his existence. To retain the thought in the midst of his daily routine that he is not doubt the Lord's own, a child of Shiva Baba, attachment and fondness for other things and persons will have gone and his ways considerably transformed.

2. I have to go back my Sweet Home

In order to bring about spiritual transformation in himself, he should not forget that the time he has to go back to Sweet Home of souls has

come. We know that when the thought that he has to board the railway train is firmly rooted in man's mind then all that he thinks of is the station only, and he begins to pack his things tight. Similarly, the office worker or the shop-keeper begins to think, now that the time to close has come and he has to go home. And, if in this very manner, man consults the World Clock and finds that *Kaliyuga* is about to end, he will know that he has now to be returning to his Home, which is the world of incorporeal souls, called *Paramdhām*. The only thought that should be in his mind is that he is now going off.

How can the boat (or for the matter of that the passengers in it) be moving towards its destination if its anchor is not yet weighed or if the boat is lying moored to the bank with ropes? Man no doubt asks for salvation but, as long as he has no thought of departing hence, and has not weighed the anchor which has tied him to this world, and he continues to be tied to it by the bonds of his own actions, how can he ever be on the path of salvation? So, it is essential that he plans well in-himself the thought that he has to be going. If this thought is stabilised, attachments will be wiped out. Instead of what *Sanyāsis* do by means of reading out to him the religious classics, such as *Yoga-Vasishta* in order to make him renounce, he made himself remember well that he has to go to *Paramdhām*, attachment will be ended and character ennobled.

The first time that astronauts went up in space, American papers gave the news that two cosmonauts had been flown aboard a spaceship by means of a rocket into the higher space, these two cosmonauts revelled in space for as many as four days and nights. On return to earth, they described their feelings. They remembered that they had gone there into space and had at last to return to earth. They felt all along that they were there a few days only to carry out their task, and had in any case, to return to earth from where they had come.

Exactly in this manner should man remember always that from *Paramdhām*,—His Sweet Home—he has come in this field of activity and has to go back to it. Those who go into space, come back to earth retaining their physical form. But, we have now learnt that we had come from *Paramdhām*,—the Holy Home of our Father on High—without any physical form and have similarly to go back in the very non-physical form in which we came. Shouldn't we, therefore, remember that we have adopted this body only after coming into this world? If this point of view is not lost sight of, surely can there be wholesome transformation to free us from the burdens of attachment and make our lives virtuous and lovely.

